

HALESOWEN CHRONICLE



Thursday, March 12, 2015

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SADDLE UP

Frank wins cycle clubman trophy at 78



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BANJO DAN

Plucky young rising star of folk scene



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Most of arrests at demo were anti-EDL

MOST of the people arrested after an English Defence League march in Dudley were counter protesters, it has emerged.

Police said five out of the 29 people arrested were supporters of the far-right EDL. But the rest were counter protesters, including supporters of the group Unite Against Fascism.

Officers arrested the people for breaching the peace during the protests on February 7 in the town centre. Most were released without charge.

Around 50 members of Unite Against Fascism held a counter-protest in Castle Street while EDL protesters gathered outside the council house on Priory Road after marching from King Street. The breakdown on the arrests was confirmed by West Midlands Police following a Freedom of Information request.

The force drafted in hundreds of extra officers from as far away as Wales to cover the demonstrations. Policing the event cost taxpayers £321,000.

Hundreds of officers from across the country were called in as more than 600 members of the far right organisation descended on the town.

Some 70 shops closed for the day.

Revamp for Victorian Day

HALESOWEN'S Victorian Day will be replaced with a new fair in an attempt to attract more people.

The event, which has run for almost 25 years, will be replaced with a Black Country Fair on July 25, as part of the month-long Black Country Festival. It will be organised by Halesowen and Rowley Regis Rotary Club.

Organiser Keith Law said: "Although the Victorian Day has always been successful, we felt a Black Country fair would be more accessible."

CALL FOR MORE NURSERY PLACES

MORE nursery places for children with special needs should be created in Dudley, the borough's education chief says, as a fresh consultation with parents got under way.

Councillor Tim Crumpton has pledged to review the services on offer to families.

It comes after the council made a U-turn on plans to scrap free transport to nurseries following a petition signed by more than 800 people.

Councillor Crumpton said the consultation had highlighted the need to look at how services could be improved, as he believed there was a shortage of nursery places in the borough.

"We are going to look at the wider picture," he said. "We need extra places and some of the children need help with transport, so we are going to look at what changes or improvements we need to make."

"I am going to meet a group of parents to discuss the outcomes of the first consultation and discuss what we are going to do next."

Councillor Crumpton said he was keen to get as many views as possible.

Value

"The consultation has offered tremendous value on many levels and has highlighted to everyone the undoubted quality of our early years services."

"It has raised a tough debate around how we deliver education for children with additional needs."

"We will now be gathering the information from the consultation before sitting down to consult further with colleagues in the council's scrutiny committee and

By Heather Large

with parents to see how we can best move forward. We made it clear from the outset that no child would be denied access to these nurseries because of money and that we would continue to provide support where it is needed.

"We know we need to look at the service in the wider context and this may involve re-modelling it to ensure everyone has access to these much-valued services," he added.

Dudley Council originally proposed the transport service for children attending specialist nurseries be cut as part of its budget proposals for 2015/16.

But the controversial move was withdrawn following consultations with parents and the tabling of an amendment by the Conservative group at a full council meeting last week.

The controlling Labour group accepted the amendment and it was passed by councillors.

Parents attending the full council meeting cheered as they heard the amendment had been supported.

The authority currently pays for dozens of children with additional needs to travel to specialist nurseries in the borough but says it is not legally required to do so.

Funny with Menaces as Dennis drops by



Pupil Emma Alonzo at Earl's High School in Halesowen with Steven Butler who writes the Dennis the Menace books

PUPILS were given a chance to meet several popular children's authors at a special event.

The Biggest Book Show On Earth 2015 came to Earl's High School in Halesowen on Friday when guests included Steven Butler, current author of the Dennis the Menace books, and Carrie Burrell, a former Cheebies presenter turned children's author.

More than a hundred children from around 20 schools were able to get their books signed at the show, which featured several talks. The visit coincided with World Book Day.

Mr Butler is the latest person to

think up new scrapes for comic book hero Dennis the Menace, who first appeared in The Beano.

He said: "Writing can be quite a solitary thing, it is nice to get out there and meet the children you are writing for."

Tracy Holland, who organised the event, said the school has hosted many well-known children's authors and runs several book clubs.

Mrs Holland said: "There were 22 primary and secondary schools involved, and 17 of our own students aged between nine and 13 also took part."

"It is great for the children to meet their favourite authors and illustrators."

"Many of the children say they love Dennis the Menace but might not know about all the history it has attached to it, so it is good for them to see it."

Other guests included illustrators Guy Parker-Rees and Simon Bartram and author Abi Elphinstone.

Director of World Book Day, Kirsten Grant, said: "There was this idea that all the big events happened in London, which is why we started the Biggest Book Show On Earth tour."

Hundreds at tribute service for Christina

A MEMORIAL service to mark the second anniversary of the death of schoolgirl Christina Edkins took place at Birmingham Cathedral.

The 16-year-old was stabbed to death on a bus in Birmingham on her way to school in Halesowen on March 7, 2013, by paranoid schizophrenic Phillip Sime-lane.

More than 200 people attended the hour-long service at St Philip's Cathedral on Saturday.

Christina's great uncle Chris Melia said: "The support of people in keeping Christina's memory alive is very important to her parents."

Christina, from Ladywood, was attacked on the number nine bus as it travelled along the Hagley Road.

Detained

She was on her way to Leasowes High School.

Phillip Sime-lane, 23, from Walsall, later admitted manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility. He was detained indefinitely under the Mental Health Act at a hearing at Birmingham Crown Court in October 2013.

A report found Christina's death could have been prevented if Sime-lane had been given mental health treatment.

Town's bus lanes axed

PLANS to scrap bus lanes in Halesowen have been approved.

Dudley transport boss Councillor Khurshid Ahmed has given the go-ahead to axe the lanes in Bromsgrove Road and westbound on Queensway.

It followed a 12-month trial which the council said had shown there were no benefits of having them.

Councillor Ahmed said: "The cost of revoking the lanes will be approximately £2,500."

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Bostin' victory for festival organisers

ABSOLUTELY bostin' — that was the comment after the Black Country Festival won a top award.

It was the day the Black Country went to London and beat competition from big names such as Barclays and Aldi to the honour. Now organisers in Dudley have called on Wolverhampton, Walsall and Sandwell to make this year's event even better.

Dudley Council's public relation campaign won the Community Engagement campaign of the Year at the PRmoment awards 2015 held in London last week.

Thousands of people attended events to mark Black Country Day, July 14, for the second year.

Campaigners led by Gary Sawers founded the Black Country Festival to coincide with the day. Steve Ed-

wards is festival committee chairman and Dave Brownhill is events organiser. Events were held primarily in Dudley thanks to the support of Dudley Council communications officer Phil Parker and Councillors Pete Lowe and Ian Marrey.

Mr Edwards, who attended the awards ceremony, said: "For us to go down all dressed up to London and win, it's absolutely bostin'.

"What we want now is Wolverhampton, Sandwell and Walsall to be involved more, not just Dudley."

Mr Sawers said plans were already gathering pace for this year's event with the return of the Halesowen Carnival among events planned.

"Things are coming together well. We just want it to be bigger and better," he said.

Concern grows over homeless on streets

MORE than 50 people are sleeping rough on streets in the West Midlands – including six in Dudley — sparking calls for more to be done to tackle the issue.

It comes as the number of homeless people in England rises by 14 per cent. The figure of 52 for rough sleepers in the Black Country, Staffordshire and Birmingham is up by one on the year before.

Statistics for autumn last year are intended to give a 'snapshot' of how many rough sleepers would be found on any one night.

The study by the Department for Communities and Local Government found that 2,744 people slept rough in England in autumn 2014, an increase of 14 per cent from 2,414 in 2013.

The number of people sleeping rough across the country has increased year-on-year over the last five years and by 55 per cent since 2010.

Brewery to be sponsor at museum

A BREWERY has joined forces with Dudley's Black Country Living Museum to stage some of the biggest events at the attraction.

Banks's Brewery, in Wolverhampton, has been named sole sponsor of the Tipton Road museum's 1940s weekend and three Halloween nights to be held later this year.

Bosses from the museum said the agreement with the brewery, which was founded in 1840 and is part of Marston's, had now been finalised.

As part of the scheme, a selection of Marston's beer will be supplied at both events and each event will be represented by its own brew. Visitors will be able to sup the brewery's Sunbeam beer at the 1940s weekend. The Halloween evenings will have Hobgoblin, a brew from sister brand Wyche-wood which is also owned by Marston's.

The museum will stock Banks's merchandise in its shop and eateries. In return Marston's staff will be working with museum staff to train in managing cellars.

Director of development at the museum Vicki Stanley said they were pleased the agreement had now been confirmed.

Doorways

High streets in Dudley and Bearwood are being used with homeless people squeezing into shop doorways or under canopies.

There are seven people sleeping rough in Wolverhampton on any given night, compared to six in 2013. There were six in Dudley — the same as the previous year — five in Walsall, which is three fewer than 2013, and two in Sandwell, which is down from three. In Birmingham there are 20, up from 14 the year before.

Chief executive Howard Sinclair, of Charity St Mungo's Broadway, which helps 2,500 homeless people across England, said: "We are extremely concerned that yet again we are seeing a rise in the levels of rough sleeping."

"This is a problem that we cannot ignore and needs to be a top priority for the next Government."

Frank's still in the frame at 78



Veteran cyclist Frank Hodgkiss, 78, is Wolverhampton Racing's clubman of the year

NEARLY 50 years after Frank Hodgkiss won a string of cycling competitions, the 78-year-old is showing no signs of slowing.

Frank has just won the clubman of the year award at Wolverhampton Racing Cycling Club. The Sedgley rider still cycles at least 85 miles a week and helps organise events throughout the year.

Though he admits that the days when he competed against Hugh Porter seem like a lifetime ago, he has no intention of locking away his bike. He says the racing club is

still a major part of his life and fellow members are some of his best friends.

Frank discovered the club during regular visits to Frank Clements' bike shop in Snow Hill. He still attends meetings every Monday night and is involved in the running of the club. His wife Penny was a keen cyclist but was forced to give up due to arthritis.

But Frank hopes to keep going for years yet. "I go out cycling three times a week and it's great to get back and have a coffee with the others," he said.

MPs back move to name road dead pets

MPS have backed calls for the Highways Agency to identify pets killed on the roads and inform owners.

It followed a 120,000 signature petition which sparked a debate in the Commons highlighting the plight of Yorkshire teacher Judy Devine whose dog, Harvey, was killed on the M62. She spent £8,000 trying to find him only to be told his body had been recovered by officials within 20 minutes of his death.

There have been calls for a 'Harvey's Law' to bring back mandatory scanning of animals to see if they are microchipped following a death on the road, as happens in Cornwall and Devon.

Stourbridge MP Margot James told the Commons: "I lost a dog on the road when I was a child, a Great Dane called Max. I have never forgotten him, but at least we knew within 24 hours or less, which saved a lot of additional heartache. Pets, especially dogs and cats, are part of the family. That is the most important reason to get this matter rectified with the national Highways Agency."

Ian Austin, MP for Dudley North, added: "Those checks should be mandatory across the country."

Talent show run at college

THE hunt is on for young dancers, singers and entertainers to enter a Sandwell talent show and win up to £500.

Auditions for the summer Shape Your Talent show are being held on April 19 from 9am to 6pm at Sandwell College.

The college and Sandwell Council are organising the talent show for young people aged nine to 19 from Sandwell who will perform in front of a panel professional judges.

For more details and to register go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/SHAPEevents

Spaghetti work

REPAIRS to Spaghetti Junction — one of the busiest stretches of road in the country — are set to drag on into next spring after workers found damage around its loadbearing supports and joints, which carry the weight of 200,000 vehicles every day.

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More jobs are under scrutiny for savings

A CONSULTATION on the second phase of a review to cut £1 million from Dudley Council's management budget will begin this month.

The council has already slashed the number of director and assistant director posts from 22 to 11 as it battles to find up to £57m of savings within three years.

Bosses will now look at the next tier down with heads of service being reviewed.

A consultation process is due to start this month.

Councillor Pete Lowe, leader of Dudley Council said: "Once complete, the major restructure currently underway in Dudley is still on track to reduce senior management costs by £1m.

Redundancy

"This is not just a one-off saving; it will be on-going, year on year.

"In the first year there will be redundancy and pension costs to take into consideration.

"However, looking to the future, the senior management restructure in Dudley is still on track to save this authority £1m each and every year."

Stabbing — teen in court

A TEENAGER will appear in Wolverhampton Crown Court accused of attempted murder after a man was stabbed on his doorstep in Dudley.

The 17-year-old youth was arrested at an address in Netherton on February 24. A 65-year-old man was attacked just before 6.15pm on the same day in Owen Street, Kates Hill, suffering serious stab wounds to his head, shoulder, chest and back.

At a hearing on Thursday it was agreed that the case will be heard in Wolverhampton on March 20.

Bostin' night out

A BOSTIN' night is in store with Black Country Gaz and comedienne Marleen. Big Up the Black Country features singing, comedy and even bellydancing at the Station Hotel, Castle Hill, on April 10. Tickets £10 include faggots and peas. Call 07866 476633.

Second chance because of 'disruptive lifestyle'

A TEENAGER from Dudley who took part in a street robbery has been given another chance to avoid being put behind bars after breaching her suspended jail sentence by failing turn up for a probation appointment.

Wolverhampton Crown Court sitting at the city's magistrates court heard that Stacey Nance was part of a group who stole a mobile phone in an attack where the victim was punched and kicked.

She was given an 18 months jail sentence

suspended for two years for robbery. She was also given a curfew with supervision when she was sentenced at Birmingham Crown Court in December.

Structure

But Nance admitted breaching the order on January 27 after she failed to attend a probation appointment.

She was then arrested and kept in custody.

Mrs Blondel Thompson, defending bar-

rist, told the hearing at Wolverhampton: "All told she has missed many appointments and the probation report indicates that this was due to her life lacking structure. She also lacks self-esteem.

"They think they can help her by putting her on a short skills course," added Mrs Thompson.

Sentencing judge Mr Recorder Ciaran Rankin agreed to follow the recommendation and he ordered Nance, of Stourbridge Road, Dudley, to attend the Mariposa Pro-

ject for 20 days to help her overcome her 'disruptive lifestyle'. She must also observe a curfew from 8pm to 6am for one month.

"You were extremely fortunate to get a suspended sentence in the first place," said the judge.

"Having being given a fresh opportunity you almost immediately failed to comply with the supervision order."

He added that his decision not to trigger the jail term was due to her age and the fact that she had spent time in custody.

NHS give GPs more power over £400m health budget

GENERAL practitioners in Dudley have been handed more power to manage the borough's £400 million health care budget.

They will work with NHS England to decide how the money is spent and buy patient services such as hospital care and physiotherapy.

Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has been given the green light to take over responsibility for co-commissioning the majority of GP services from next month. It is among some of the first organisations in the country to be given the go-ahead by NHS England.

Doctors will be more involved in planning developments and making improvements to existing services. They have already introduced longer opening hours at surgeries on Saturday mornings and preparations are under way for a new urgent care centre to open at Russells Hall Hospital next month.

Pressure

The new centre has been designed to reduce pressure on the under-pressure A&E and will replace the walk-in centre at Holly Hall. It will be open 24/7 and patients will be able to make appointments or just turn up. Clinical executive Dr Jas Rathore said taking on more responsibility would enable Dudley CCG to make improvements.

"When we say 'co-commissioning' we mean taking joint responsibility with

By Heather Large

NHS England for commissioning, planning, developing, delivering, monitoring and managing the budget for GP services across Dudley," he said.

"We know our area, we know where GP services are most in need of improvement, we know the practices which are providing an outstanding service and can help to lead by example."

"Taking on a co-commissioning role will help us to make sure that our knowledge helps to shape future developments and protect the range of services."

"It also helps us to ensure that there remains a local focus on primary care in Dudley, supporting colleagues in general practice to get the best services for local people," he added.

Chairman of Dudley CCG Dr David Hegarty said: "Building better GP services and wrapping improved community health care around those GP services is a key part of our vision."

Museum seeks volunteers

THE Black Country Living Museum is looking for more volunteers to join its ranks of re-enactors.

The museum in Tipton Road, Dudley, also needs people to help behind the scenes at its 26-acre site.

The museum has a number of volunteer groups including the Black Country Motor Company maintaining the collection of vintage vehicles. See the website bclm.com/ volunteer or call 0121 557 9643.



One of the firm's 'spidermen', Ryan Cook, 25, from Stourbridge, at the cathedral

In spired to scale heights at cathedral

A GROUP of self-confessed 'spidermen' were prepared to scale great heights to help rid Lichfield Cathedral of a problem with birds droppings.

A team from Stourbridge firm Safer Access Solutions scaled the inside of the 35 metre high spire to install a mesh to prevent pigeons from getting in and fouling the historic building.

The four strong group answered a call from the cathedral, which wants to open an existing viewing gallery on the outside of the cathedral roof to the public by Easter, but had not been able to do so until now because to get access would have meant passing through the church tower covered in bird mess.

Safer Access Solutions boss Gary Cook said the birds had got in through slats in the roof of the church but the mesh would prevent them in future.

His company used ropes attached to bolts to scale the heights. The other three employees then followed him to the top and abseiled back down again after installing the mesh.

"We are basically spidermen — we climb to the top of high buildings to do jobs," he said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Town hall repair work on schedule

REPAIR work at Dudley Town Hall is on track to finish by the end of the month.

Loose plaster on the ceiling forced the venue to close in December with some shows being cancelled, moved or postponed.

Concerts and performances needed to be re-arranged or moved to alternative venues.

Wednesday evening dances, run by Fiona Bennett, have been moved to Dudley College.

Officials said work was progressing well and due to be completed on schedule.

Lions roar in to help responders

A LIONS club has selected the Black Country First Responders as its charity of the year.

Dudley Lions Club will be donating money to the organisation, volunteers who attend emergencies and are called out if they can reach a scene more quickly than the ambulance service. They receive no funding from the NHS or Government.

Responders usually cover an area within seven minutes of their home, backed by ambulance crews.

Talk on veteran of Light Brigade

THE life of a Black Country alderman who was a veteran of the Crimean War will be in the spotlight at a coffee morning on March 27.

A talk on John Kilvert will take place at Wednesbury Museum and Art Gallery at 11am, admission £2.

Alderman Kilvert was the Mayor of Wednesbury in 1905 and took part in the Charge of the Light Brigade.

Canal crafty to help Comic Relief

VISITORS to Dudley canal tunnel can make masks to raise money by taking part in craft activities in support of Comic Relief on Sunday.

Children can take part in the event organised by Dudley Canal Trust from 11.30am to 1.30pm. Call 0121 557 6265 or email info@dudleycanaltrust.org.uk to book.

Beer lovers meet

THE Dudley and South Staffordshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale is holding its annual general meeting in the upstairs room at The Court House pub in New Street, Dudley, on March 30 at 8pm.



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| 3rd April | 4 days | Weston Super Mare | York Hotel, Tewkesbury, Cheddar Gorge, City of Wells and Gloucester | £179 |
| 3rd April | 4 days | Llandudno | Four Oaks Hotel, train ride on Ffestiniog, Boat or Steam train ride at Llangollen train ride at Padarn | |
| 10th April | 3 days | Sidmouth | The Bedford Hotel, ride the Seaton Tramway, Weston and Exeter | £179 |
| 13th April | 5 days | Bournemouth | Cumberland Hotel, Dorset cruise, Steam train ride, Salisbury Cathedral & Stonehenge | £279 |
| 13th April | 5 days | Isle of Wight | Trouville Hotel, 3 stars, 3 excursions included | £279 |
| 24th April | 5 days | Scarborough | Royal Hotel, 3 stars, Humber Bridge, The Deep Aquarium, Whitby, Steam train ride, Eden Camp and York City | £259 |
| 27th April | 5 days | Eastbourne | Landdown Hotel, Brighton, Rye and Battle | £295 |
| 4th May | 5 days | Ilfracombe | Osborne Hotel Excursions Lincoln, Coombe Matin, Bideford | £259 |
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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

NHS place-names. A friend just back from hospital describes the daily delight of being wheeled between the Catheter Suite and the Discharge Lounge.

IN darker vein, the government's Animal & Plant Agency is advertising a couple of jobs, one for a disease-containment manager, the other for a lab technician. A sharp-eyed reader spotted the adverts in a trade journal under the cheerful heading: "Post Mortem Opportunities - Weybridge."

DID you catch the spokesman for Kew Gardens on the radio saying the only way to overcome its cash problems was to "grow our income"? Plant some for me.

BEFORE long, according to estimates this week, Britain will spend more on overseas aid than on its own defence. There is a name for policies like this. Madness.

MOST cheering sight of the week was the CCTV footage of the thief in Drogheda, Ireland, who tried to smash the window of a Mercedes with a brick. It bounced back, hit him in the face and knocked him out until the cops arrived. Perfect.

WHILE every UKIP candidate and councillor has been relentlessly examined for signs of racism, anti-semitism or bigotry, the Green Party's candidates seem to have escaped scrutiny. This is probably because the default media mindset is UKIP=bad, Green=good. But the painfully embarrassing "brain fade" interview by Green leader Natalie Bennett surely raises questions. It is fair to assume that the mumbling, stumbling, lost-for-facts Ms Bennett, being leader of the organisation, is one of the best candidates the Green Party can produce. So what are the worst like?

HOW times change. In 2015, UKIP leader Nigel Farage's definition of "normal" immigration is about 50,000 arrivals a year. In 1968, Enoch Powell's definition of madness leading to "Rivers of Blood" was - about 50,000 arrivals a year.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Whereabouts unknown for 39 sex offenders

ALMOST 40 convicted sex offenders in the West Midlands have gone missing. One has been missing for almost 10 years.

Police revealed that they do not know the whereabouts of 39 registered sex offenders, one who went missing in 2006 and a further nine between 2010 and 2012.

Behind London, the West Midlands has the highest number of missing sex offenders in England.

West Mercia Police said six registered sex offenders were missing, including one whose whereabouts had been unknown for eight years. Figures from Staffordshire Police were not available.

Across the country, 396 sex offenders are wanted, including some who have been missing for more than a decade.

One convicted sex offender in Gloucestershire has been missing since 2000, another in Northumbria disappeared in May 2002, while Humberside Police said the whereabouts of one registered sex offender had been unknown since September 2004.

Registered sex offenders - including rapists and paedophiles - are required to inform police and probation officers of their addresses and are supposed to be monitored by officials working under multi-agency public protection arrangements.

By Tim Spiers

In a statement through campaign group The Phoenix Post, Sara Payne, whose daughter Sarah was abducted and killed in 2000 by convicted paedophile Roy Whiting, said: "It's completely unacceptable that any registered sex offenders have disappeared from authority management, putting the public at risk. It's time to take some serious proactive action to bring them back under the police radar."

A Home Office spokeswoman said: "The UK has some of the toughest powers in the world to deal with sex offenders and we are committed to ensuring the system is as robust as possible."

"It is for the police to manage offenders in their area, but we work closely with forces to ensure legislation is effective and that officers have all the tools they need."

WPC 56 back on the beat



Claudia Jessie is WPC Annie Taylor in the TV series

AFTER impressive ratings and good reviews for its first two series, WPC 56 has returned to our screens for a third series.

The daytime drama, much of which which was filmed at the Black Country Living Museum, follows the day-to-day encounters of a woman police constable in the testosterone-fuelled world of policing in the 1950s at the fictional Brinsford Police Station, a satellite town of Birmingham.

The drama's former leading lady, WPC Gina Dawson, played by Jennie Jacques - who recently starred in the blockbuster Vikings - has moved on to the Metropolitan Police Force and rookie firebrand WPC Annie Taylor has stepped in to walk her beat.

Taylor, played by talented newcomer Claudia Jessie, is a determined and no-nonsense young copper determined to follow in the footsteps of her bobby father.

Jessie plays Taylor as a tough cookie, using her Manchester-born Brummie accent to full effect. WPC 56 airs at 2.15pm on BBC One.

It's a pitch battle over hike in hire price

FOOTBALL coaches and players have called for plans to increase pitch hire costs across the borough by up to 40 per cent to be kicked into touch.

But league officials and teams have been told they should take over the management of their pitches.

Senior adult teams will see a fees hike from just over £500 per season to around £710 under new rises ratified by the council last week. League officials and managers hope to force the council to rethink before it is introduced in August.

Councillor Patrick Harley, leader of the Conservative group opposition, helps run High Acres Football Club at King George V Park, Wordsley, in the Dudley and Cradley Heath Football League. He said the council would lose out if the rise caused teams to fold.

"They say the fees are the best in the Black Country. That is because the facilities are awful," he said. "They only come to mow the grass, paint the lines and take the goals down at the end of the season before throwing some seed down."

Leisure boss Councillor Hilary Bills said the council had been subsidising pitches but had to make savings, adding: "If they try to manage them themselves they can get hold of more funding than the council could."

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Fresh bid to revive area of Waterfront

MERRY Hill Shopping Centre bosses Intu have launched fresh efforts to find tenants for the nearby Waterfront development.

The company, which runs more than 20 shopping centres, including the Trafford Centre in Manchester, inherited the canal-side site when it acquired Westfield's half share of Merry Hill for £407.7 million last spring.

It is already planning to spend £20m on Merry Hill over the next three years, enlarging stores, creating more restaurants and attracting more big-name retailers. But it is also aiming to revamp the Waterfront.

Dudley Council has launched Dudley Business Investment Zone in a bid to fill up empty office space and create jobs at the Brierley Hill site, which comprises offices, retail and leisure premises. It is soon to include 181 canal-side apartments as office block Point North is converted into The Landmark luxury flats.

Now, Intu has hired Halls Commercial to act alongside existing property agents Vail Williams to stimulate interest in The Waterfront.

Intu senior asset manager Nick Round said: "The Waterfront is a key part of our ownership and it is our responsibility to ensure that we maintain and enhance the vibrant working community built around the marina."

Number of appeals over first school choices rise

MORE parents are appealing after their children missed out on getting their first choice school places in Dudley borough.

The number of appeals lodged by parents rose from 287 in 2013 to 323 in 2014, according to a Freedom of Information request by UKIP.

Latest figures show 2,809 children, around 82 per cent, were able to get in to a place at their first choice secondary school in the borough.

But that meant one in five pupils failed to secure places at their preferred secondary schools in September.

A total of 298 got their second choice, while 70 students got their third choice school.

West Midlands MEP and Sedgley councillor Bill Etheridge said schools are coming under increasing pressures.

"The increase in the number of appeals from parents is very worrying as it makes you question how our schools can cope with ever increasing pressures on places and resources," he said.

"Children have a right to a quality education in their locality and I believe strongly in parental choice but sadly more and more parents are failing to get their children accepted by their first choice schools."

Councillor Etheridge said public services were facing pressure at a time when the

By Andrew Turton

Government had failed to meet its immigration targets. "How can our schools, hospitals, and indeed local authorities plan service delivery when the Government promised to keep numbers down to 'tens of thousands'?" he asked.

Councillor Tim Crumpton, in charge of children's services, refuted claims the appeals rise was linked to immigration.

"We have nothing that points to immigration being a factor on this in Dudley, on the contrary, we have sufficient secondary school places to meet the needs of all our children," he said.

"Eight two per cent of Dudley children are being allocated their first preferred school while 94 per cent have been allocated a place at one of their preferred schools and 100 per cent have been offered a place at a borough school."

£200k loan helps business grow



Mark Meakin of Lloyds Bank Commercial Banking, left, and Kevin Marklew, owner of Rolla V in Halesowen

A MANUFACTURER of tooling and machinery in Halesowen is to create new jobs following investment in new machinery.

Rolla V has bought the new equipment, to help improve its production capabilities, with the support of a £200,000 loan from Lloyds Bank.

The company, established more than 15 years ago, specialises in the production of tooling for press brake machines, which are used to bend sheet and plate metal.

It supplies tools for a range of high profile manufacturers in the sheet metal industry, including Amada, Trumpf and Bystronic.

Rolla V, based on Park Lane Industrial Estate, exports 80 per cent of its products to clients in North America, Europe and Asia. It recognised a need to invest in a new grinding machine, in order to enhance speed and efficiency.

It approached long term banking provider, Lloyds Bank Commercial Banking, and its commercial finance

team, which provided a £200,000 asset finance facility to support the purchase of the machinery.

Following the recent investment, Rolla V's production levels have already increased by over 20 per cent. The business now has the capabilities to design and produce new components, expanding its product line.

The business has an annual turnover of around £1 million and employs 12 staff, with plans to create four new jobs in the next six months.

Disney praise for college designers

STUDENTS at Halesowen College had the chance to design rides and learn about the technology behind the scenes at Disneyland Paris as part of an ICT conference.

The group learnt about technology used by Disney and the control systems, which are behind the popular rides in the park, including Space Mountain.

After a day in the park they were challenged to design their own themed rollercoaster and present it to Disney judges.

One team designed a Disney Fantasia ride which included aquarium animations and a 30ft spiral climb and drop. The other team based their ride on the film Frozen and included 3D animatronics.

The Disney judges praised both teams.

Woman escapes bathroom blaze

A WOMAN suffered minor smoke inhalation after her shower caught fire. She had just got out of the shower at her home on Bishop's Walk in Halesowen when she noticed smoke coming from her bathroom.

Haden Cross fire station dispatched two fire engines.

Watch Commander Dan Griffiths said: "When the lady first noticed the fire she did the right thing by shutting the door, calling us and then exiting the property. Electric showers come with an isolation switch that we advise using in between showers."

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews

STAND by your beds. At last, a bit of commonsense from the governing classes.

First of all, Communities Secretary Eric Pickles has told traffic wardens to give people 10 minutes leeway before hitting them with parking tickets. And now Dudley Council has announced it will remove two bus lanes from Halesowen. If it was up to me we would get rid of traffic wardens altogether.

Around 10 years ago Bridgnorth found itself without a traffic warden, and the town didn't collapse into anarchy. A few people parked on the pavement and the one-hour limit in the High Street was routinely ignored, but did it mark the end of civilisation? Hardly.

The money saved from getting rid of all the traffic wardens would pay for more police, who could deal with the small number of serious parking violations which put public safety in danger, while turning a blind eye to the ones that don't.

While we're about it, let's get rid of all bus lanes. I have nothing against buses, in the past week I have used them twice. What I don't accept is that boarding a vehicle which happens to have two floors and a staircase somehow makes me more virtuous than other road users. Let's be honest. The majority of people who use buses tend not to be in a hurry.

During my two journeys last week, the passengers broadly fell into one of two categories: retired people doing their shopping, and teenagers on their way back from the local comprehensive. The elderly folk didn't look to be in any sort of rush, I would say they probably enjoyed having time for a natter. The rowdy schoolkids, who made up the majority of the passengers, were definitely in no hurry to get to their destination early.

And me? Well I had taken the day off work to take my car into the garage. So I wasn't in a hurry either. However, the people in the surrounding cars and vans were in a hurry. People driving to and from work. Delivery drivers, white van men, truckers. The people whose work pays the taxes which subsidise the buses in the first place.

And they were stuck in the traffic queues while the bus glided through its designated lane, like a Communist Party official in the Zil Lanes of 1980s Moscow. Of course, the people responsible for the bus lanes don't see it like that. They doubtless take the view that by inconveniencing motorists, they make public transport more attractive. But do they really expect the washing machine repair man to start loading his tools onto the bus? How would they feel if the fishmonger started carting his wares up the stairs of the No. 7?

One of these days, the governing classes will realise that motorists are not some dissident group but just ordinary people going about their business.



The Miners Statue at Brownhills High Street's island



Historian Carl Chinn at the Hamstead Miners



The Davy Lamp miners memorial in Hednesford

Memorials keep mining pride alive

ADAM BURLING takes a look at the memorials that have helped to keep mining alive despite pit closures

THEY are monuments to a by-gone era when thousands of men toiled for long days in collieries across the Black Country and Staffordshire.

And though the mining industry has almost died out, memorials of all shapes and sizes are keeping its heritage alive.

Two are currently being planned in Staffordshire, as residents seek a way of paying tribute to the workers who spent their working lives down the pits.

And others have already been installed in Walsall Wood, Brownhills, Great Barr and Hednesford in recent years.

As the 50th anniversary of the end of the miners' strike was marked on Tuesday, the bitter dispute between Margaret Thatcher and the National Union of Mineworkers has been at the forefront of people's minds.

Communities were torn apart by the closures, with men who once had no trouble providing for their families suddenly struggling to make ends meet. Organisers say the memorials are giving villages and towns a sense of identity again.

The 55ft high replica pit head in Walsall Wood is believed to be the biggest mining memorial in the world.

Others bear the names of former pitmen, while the Davy Lamp memorial in Hednesford is surrounded by engraved paving slabs.

And there are also tragic tales lurking behind the fond memories, as scores of men died in accidents and disasters.

The desire to create a fitting tribute has also led to a dispute in Rugeley, with plans for a statue in the town delayed by a disagreement over the location.



The mining memorial in Walsall Wood, based just off Coppice Road

It has now been confirmed that the memorial will finally be unveiled on Globe Island in September.

The significance of mining to the Black Country and Staffordshire cannot be underestimated, with the Cannock Chase coalfields once supported 48 mines and the last, Littleton, shut in 1993. Only a pit wheel remains at the site now, in the shadow of the modern design of the Littleton Green Community School – providing a stark contrast between the area's past and future.

Council chiefs commissioned artist

Andy De Comyn to produce four 9ft sculpted figures for Rugeley, to commemorate 80 miners who were killed underground at Brereton and Lea Hall collieries.

And in Hednesford, the final of 3,500 bricks was laid at the Davy Lamp memorial a year ago.

With a museum also dedicated to the town's mining heritage, Hednesford has plenty of pride in the role it played in the industry.

In the early part of the 20th century there were seven pits working in the

area. But by 1975 only three collieries remained, providing employment for 5,200 men.

In December 1982 the last pit – West Cannock No.5 – known locally as the 'Tackeroo' ceased production.

Probably the most iconic of all the memorials in the Midlands is the 30ft steel-clad sculpture of a miner holding a lamp and pick axe that towers over Brownhills.

It was produced by artist John McKenna and has become a fixture on the landscape.

Mining was the main source of income for families in Brownhills until the last pit closed in the 1950s.

Brownhills was a hub of the industry, with at least 10 working pits there at its height.

The deaths of 144 men looms large over the history of Hamstead Colliery in Great Barr, where the memorial features an original coal tub on rails mounted on a brick plinth.

The worst accident was in March 1908 when a fire broke out in the pit, and though 250 men escaped, 25 perished – along with John Welsby, who was hailed a hero as he tried to save the others.

He was awarded an Edward VII medal and a local road, Welsby Avenue, was named after him.

For 100 years there was no visible memorial to the men who died, and the colliery as a whole.

But the Hamstead Miners Memorial Trust was set up in 2002 with the task of raising the necessary cash.

A replica of winding gear from the Walsall Wood colliery that stood close to the site, it was a part of a £40,000 project that also included sculptures of miners.

And it has attracted interest across the globe – achieving exactly what Mr Perry set out to do.

He said he wanted to create something to make people talk about the miners for generations to come. And it proves the links with our past are showing no signs of breaking.

WEEK IN POLITICS

with Daniel Wainwright

"I'VE unblocked the logjam," declared David Cameron in the living room of the house he was visiting. "Blimey," I thought. "That's multi-tasking."

That is, until I realised he was on about the leaders' debates rather than the downstairs loo. We were in a showhome in Cannock where lots of people have made use of the coalition's Help to Buy programme.

It could be argued that if the biggest political kicking the Prime Minister got this week was about whether he wants to spend more time saying 'long term economic plan' on the telly, as opposed to the immigration figures, he's not doing that badly.

But it still didn't look particularly good for him that he only wants to go up against Ed Miliband during prime time once before May 7 and he wants five other party leaders there to dice each other in the crossfire.

So Mr Cameron reckons he has 'unblocked the logjam' by agreeing to a debate that has to happen before Parliament is dissolved on March 30.

Weary

It turns out that rather than debating Mr Miliband the Prime Minister would rather be spending time up here.

"Let's hold the debate before the campaign takes place because otherwise it takes all the life out of the campaign and I want to be in Cannock, in Stafford, in Cornwall, in Cumbria, in Norfolk, in Suffolk," he said.

"Now is the time to hold a debate and I have, as it were, unblocked the logjam by saying let's have a seven-corner debate, let's have it before the campaign starts."

That's right. Before the campaign starts. That's the campaign that's basically been going on since last summer.

So if you weren't already weary of the pledges, the warnings, the scaremongering and the one-upmanship, you soon will be.

□□□□

"Sometimes it seems that environmental challenges like global warming are so big we can't possibly do anything about them as individuals. Or we are so busy and stressed in our everyday lives that we don't have time to think about it, or to take action. But tackling environmental issues – from climate change to energy use, waste to transport – is important for our future and in our daily lives we can all be doing something to reduce the harmful impact of our actions on the environment."

So wrote Harriet Harman, deputy leader of the Labour party. This the same politician who came to the Black Country this week and drove around in a fossil-fuelled pink campaign minibus. And it is the same politician who then got a train back to London while her minibus drove off somewhere else.

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Midwife show sparks nun memories

EVERY time that I watch the TV programme 'Call the Midwife', my memory goes back to my childhood.

I was born in Bloomfield Road, Tipton, and just up the road from us was a bike shop. My first memory was that we used to take accumulators there to be charged up but I cannot remember the name of the then owner.

Whoever it was, was followed by a man who lived in Sedgley name Jack Bodenham, who rode a scrambler motor bike. He was followed by Ron Coe, who used to travel to the shop from his home in Bushbury.

Ron used to work for Jack Hateley, and learned how to build frames from Jack. For many years, I owned a frame that was built by Ron, and it was only confined to the scrap bin a few years ago.

Two nuns used to bring their tricycles for maintenance at Ron's shop. I have asked lots of people if they know what convent they came from but no one knows. They used to travel from Bradley's Lane direction.

I would love to find out. Can anyone help please?

P COLE
Kingswinford

Hill needs two lanes

WELL done to Dudley Council on closing the bus lanes in Halesowen as they were causing congestion.

Now, how about putting Mucklow Hill back to two lanes as it used to be?

That is surely a congestion hotspot in the mornings, as the traffic is back down to nearly the bottom of the hill some mornings.

It is also regularly trailing back to the island at the B&Q junction, as motorists are trying to get back in the nearside lane past what used to be the MEB offices — only for the carriageway to go back to two lanes just past there.

The exhaust pollution must be horrendous for the residents at the top of the hill.

So, over to you Dudley council.

M GRAINGER
Halesowen

Backlash is unfair to OAPs

WHAT have we done to deserve this backlash? We went to work, provided homes for our kids without help from the state, only visited the doctor when absolutely necessary and still we seem to be blamed for the poor state of our once great Britain.

For years I have funded those who cannot work or will not work, whilst I go out to work come rain or shine.

I, and others of my generation deserve better in our latter years. We can no longer earn a living so please give us a rest.

C GWILLIAMS
Brierley Hill

Filthy mess blights the hedgerows

I HAVE recently driven along Lutley Lane, Halesowen, on my way to Northfield via Illey, trying to take in the great views of our country, with views of Clent Hills and along to Frankley Beches.

What I really noticed were not the great views but the filthy mess along the hedgerows, littered with cans, wrappers, polythene bags, bottles, fast food containers, black bags of rubbish, etc.

What is the mentality of dumping rubbish in countryside... or anywhere. We have become a country with a great lack of respect, no pride, no care for our environment. What can be done about it?

Councils should be more vigilant, heavy fines for perpetrators, maybe the unemployed and those on benefits should do litter picks, giving something back in turn? Maybe there should be more education in schools on awareness. Only last week I filled a black bag of rubbish from my local wood — does anyone care anymore?

M HANKIN
Halesowen

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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Time to end the council tax freeze

I MAY become unpopular with some people by voicing my opinion on the freeze of the council tax by Dudley MBC, but I am very much against it.

This is the fifth year it has been frozen and as each year has gone by we have seen spending on services cut and council staff jobs lost.

One only has to compare our facilities with those of some other boroughs to see what a second class area we have become.

If there was a small rise of three pounds or so a month — not even the cost of a pint of beer — I am sure that most people would not object, and those few pounds per household would add up

to quite a sum for the council to save some of our facilities — and not waste it on unnecessarily altering the Market Place yet again!

This rise would not affect the poorer members of our community as it would be covered by their housing benefit.

The rise and its results could make a big difference to our well-being and pride in our town.

The councillors should make this paramount when making the decision on rising or freezing council tax — and not concentrate on vote-catching and their own popularity.

S MATANO
Wall Heath

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COMPETITION

Classic chance for close-up of 'priceless rust'

HUNDREDS of polished classic cars, restoration projects and barn finds made up of 'priceless rust' are set to appear at Birmingham's NEC soon as the Practical Classics Restoration and Classic Car Show returns to the West Midlands.

Organisers have teamed up with the Chronicle series to offer 45 lucky readers the chance to win a pair of tickets.

Around 500 classic cars are expected to be on display with 100 car clubs revealing their ongoing and completed restoration projects.

There will be a trio of restoration showcases with the grand final of the Restorer of the Year and the Pride of Restoration, completed by enthusiasts in their home garages and 'Epic Restorations' completed by some of the most skilled craftsmen in the UK.

There will be the UK's biggest display of barn finds in the Heritage Barn Find showcase with around 25 vehicles, found in various states of repair.

Celebrity guests include the Wheeler Dealers Mike Brewer and Edd China, and Car SOS' Fuzz Townshend as well as Red Dwarf's Chris Barrie.

There will be car parades, a 48-hr restoration and classic game shows, with great prizes up for grabs. Expert advice will also be on offer.

If you're more about driving than restoring, take a Dream Ride with the Sporting Bears - a 10-mile ride as passenger in one of the cars from the Dream Rides Garage in exchange for a donation to charity. Silverstone Auctions will be back with its Restoration Sale.



Chance to see all variety of cars



HOW TO ENTER

To be in with a chance of winning a pair of tickets simply answer the following question.

Who runs the Restoration Sale?

Send your answers (postcard only) with full address and contact number to Classic Cars Competition, Chronicle Editorial, 52-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES. Closing date: Tuesday, March 17. Usual rules apply. Editor's decision is final.

*Ticket prices have been frozen so to book tickets and for the latest updates, visit www.necrestoration-show.com

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Miami's nice but Brum is better, say experts

FORGET Hong Kong, Miami and Dubai, life in Birmingham is officially better.

The second city has been ranked as having a higher quality of life than all of these international hotspots – and the best in the UK outside of London.

Overall, it comes 52nd out of 230 places in the global Mercer Quality of Living Report 2015. Brum is jointly ranked alongside sun-soaked, history-rich, foodie-heaven Rome.

The city was placed ahead of Hong Kong, Miami and Dubai as well as UK rivals Glasgow 55th, Aberdeen 57th and Belfast 63rd.

Sir Albert Bore, leader of Birmingham City Council, said: "This confirmation of what its growing numbers of residents have known for some time. The city's exceptional offer benefits its residents, visitors and workers alike."

Outstanding

"With everything from shopping to culture, international sporting events to Michelin-starred restaurants on our doorstep, it's little wonder that this report has confirmed Birmingham's position as an outstanding place to live."

"This will be an exceptional year for Birmingham, with the city hosting both Rugby World Cup games and the Ashes, as well as the arrival of the Grand Central development with its flagship John Lewis store and city cultural celebrations."

The ranking announcement follows figures showing that Birmingham's Christmas market and other offerings attracted record visitors and consumer spend in 2014 – with 5.5 million visitors spending an all-time high of £397 million across the city.

Games in the rugby world cup are due to take place at Villa Park in September and the third Ashes test is at Edgbaston on July 29.



The world-famous Selfridges store in Birmingham, which opened in 2003

Social care jobs on offer

SOCIAL care professionals can find out more about job opportunities available at a recruitment fair in Birmingham.

The jobs will be advertised at the Compass Birmingham Jobs Fair for the social care sector taking place at the Thinktank, Millennium Point, on March 18.

As well as finding out about existing vacancies and having the opportunity to speak to employees already working in the area, job hunters will also be en-

couraged to put their details on file via a 'talent pool'. Councillor Val Gibson, Wolverhampton's families boss, said: "We are attending this national event to promote the opportunities we currently have within our Children's Service and to build a database of suitably qualified and experienced candidates."

People can apply for positions via the www.wmjjobs.co.uk website. Potential visitors to the jobs fair should visit www.compassjobsfair.com/Events/Birmingham to book their place.

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10 **Fast train to capital at risk — engineer**

Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, March 12, 2015

DIRECT train services to London could be lost from the Black Country unless council bosses can prove they are needed, a top railway engineer has warned.

Andrew McNaughton, technical director of the proposed north-south high-speed train line HS2, said it was essential councils acted now to make the case why fast services to the capital from their towns should be kept.

It has been a major concern among opponents to HS2 that stations such as Wolverhampton and Dudley/Sandwell will lose their fast services to Euston because they will be replaced by a high-speed service from Birmingham.

Mr McNaughton said the Government has said towns should expect 'broadly similar services' to the ones they currently have when HS2 is completed in 2026.

Process

"It is not like playing Thomas the Tank Engine," said Mr McNaughton. "You can't make promises now."

"The start of this process is long-term planning and the West Midlands needs to get involved now. 'The Midlands are good at this."

"Ultimately, Network Rail and the Department for Transport will decide but local government has a key role to play."

More volunteers are needed at new valley visitor centre

THE Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) has launched an appeal for extra volunteers ahead of the opening of a new £400,000 visitor centre in Sandwell Valley.

It is being built on the site of the old building, off Tanhouse Lane, in West Bromwich, which was damaged in an arson attack five years ago.

Work began in October last year and is expected to be completed by the summer, when the centre will welcome its first visitors.

Now staff at the nature reserve are appealing for people to volunteer at the centre, which looks out over Forge Mill Lake.

RSPB spokesman Nadia Shaikh said: "The centre will be a place where visitors can find out about wildlife, families can take part in a whole host of activities and somewhere to unwind and enjoy the view with a cup of tea."

Dedicated

"But the most important missing piece is the friendly volunteer who will be there to help."

"We already have a great team of dedicated volunteers who help on the reserve, but with the new centre opening shortly we're coming up a bit short and need some extra hands."

Volunteers need to be able to spare a few hours a

By Heather Large

week but don't have to be a wildlife experts.

"We already have a team of over 90 friendly volunteers who help us with everything from answering phones to digging ponds to counting butterflies; so people are bound to make new friends too," added Ms Shaikh.

Staff are aiming to have the new centre completed by June, in time for an official opening in July.

It will boast an open plan multi-purpose area, volunteer room, an office and an outdoor wear store with toilet facilities.

The two-storey modern-looking building will also have a porch and terrace area and the centre will not only be used by staff and visitors, but also volunteers and community groups.

Call reserve staff on 0121357 7395 or email nadia.shaikh@rspb.org.uk.

Rarely seen portraits go on display



Exhibitions officer Adrian Durkin next to Stourbridge artist Brian Fletcher's self portrait

THE great and good of Dudley's past will be in the spotlight in a new exhibition spanning 200 years Dudley Museum and Art Gallery.

More than 50 portraits ranging from explorer Sir John Franklin to Mary Stevens, wife of one of Stourbridge's greatest benefactors, will be on display in Face to Face, which opened at the attraction in St James's Road this week.

Some of the paintings have never been on public show while others are seldom seen on display.

Dancer

Famous pieces in the collection include an oil painting of Mr and Mrs Bamfylde by JJ Zoffany, the renowned 18th century portraitist, as well as a lithograph of a dancer by Henri Matisse.

Exhibitions officer Adrian Durkin said: "There are paintings of the great and good of Dudley, with some recognisable names and others which are now only familiar to local historians."

The exhibition runs until June 27 and admission is free.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Chaplain is all shook up as Elvis

A RUGBY club chaplain will be appearing in a very different guise as he hosts an Elvis tribute show.

Andy Kelso is performing at Spring Meadow Social Club, in Spring Meadow, Old Hill tomorrow night (Friday).

The show at 7.30pm is comprised of the best of Elvis with gospel songs and stories from Mr Kelso's life.

Chaplain to Worcester Warriors Rugby Club, he also goes on the road with his Elvis show and has been shortlisted for a place on this year's Britain's Got Talent.

Tickets are £6 each or £20 for family of four including pizza buffet. Tickets are available from Holy Trinity Church, Old Hill, or 07989 472560.

Mikado is set for stage at Old Rep

GILBERT and Sullivan performance troupe Birmingham Savoyards are staging The Mikado towards the end of March.

The classic comic opera was one of the composers' most successful and the Savoyards take to the stage of the Old Rep at Station Street on Tuesday, March 24, to Saturday, March 28.

Shows start at 7.30pm and tickets are available from Mrs A Barnbrook on 0121 242 2791, or the Old Rep box office on 0121 359 9444.

Book online at www.oldreptheatre.org.uk, or email tickets@birminghamsavoyards.org.uk



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Greedy bosses of roof firm conned customers

DIRECTORS of a roofing firm initiated a 'frenzy of commission-led greed' as they conned customers in the Black Country out of millions.

Alan Wilson, aged 54, and Christopher Wilkes, aged 45, the directors of Therma Seal (Thermal Coatings) UK, have been jailed at Wolverhampton Crown Court for their roles in one of the largest ever fraud cases.

A third defendant, Julie Barrett, of Hewell Avenue, Bromsgrove, was found guilty on one count of fraud and cleared of nine others. She is due to be sentenced on April 1 and has been told she is likely to receive a community sentence.

Customers in Dudley and Stourbridge were targeted.

Wilson and Wilkes were running a company that had an £8.5m turnover and 2,700 customers during the period of the fraud between 2010 and 2012.

The duo made a number of bogus claims about a roof paint in leaflets. This included that it could make a heat saving of between 15 per cent and 40 per cent and reduce heat loss by 25 per cent but they knew that the information was false.

Sentence

Judge Martin Walsh said: "I am satisfied that both of you knew the claims made could not be substantiated. You embarked on a frenzy of commission-led greed and the imposition of the intended sentence will not only be a punishment, but deter any other perpetrators who might seek to con the public."

He said the defendants, who were found guilty of fraud by a jury, did not deliberately target the elderly, but a "consequence of the recruitment process" to get new customers was that



Bogus claims over paint has landed director Alan Wilson in prison

many of them were elderly, retired and vulnerable.

The pair had considerable experience of direct sales and had made 'grossly exaggerated' claims about the product. He said the company had traded fraudulently from the outset.

Charlene Sumnall, mitigating for Wilkes, of Tanworth Lane, Solihull, said the defendant had to break the news to his children that he was likely to go to prison.

She added: "It is not a fraud deliberately targeted at the elderly so Mr Wilkes could lead a wealthy lifestyle. He leads a modest lifestyle."

She said he apologised to all those affected by the fraud.



Sales representative Julie Barrett will be sentenced next month

Denis Barry, mitigating for Wilson, of Fazeley Road, Tamworth, said his client had a heart condition and had resigned as a director.

The pair were jailed for five years and disqualified from being company directors for eight years.

Following the hearing, Chris King, principle Trading Standards officer with Dudley Council, said: "The charges of fraudulent trading were a landmark case for us."

"We are very pleased with the result of this trial and we have seen significant custodial sentences for Mr Wilson and Mr Wilkes that reflects how seriously the court views this offence."



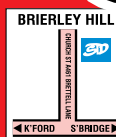
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STELLA 50, gorgeous, voluptuous and all woman seeks sensual older male, who knows just what he wants for lots of naughty fun and TLC. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416707 ☺

SLIM fair haired lady, 5ft4 looking for a male 30 to 40 for ltr in warwickshire area. Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4527227 ☺

PAULA 40, sensual, young at heart brunette looking for some fun and romance with a tall outgoing male. Call if you feel the same. ACA Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416681 ☺

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel No: 0905 002 1883 Box No: 413399

VAL 41, pretty, cuddly, flirty, seeks similar fun loving male for an uncomplicated no strings relationship. Age/looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416601 ☺

ADVENTUROUS sexy lady, 38yrs, married but seeks no strings fun with discreet man, any age. I'm tall, slim and dominant. Aca. Tel No: 0905 002 1937 Box No: 415301

EILEEN 49, lovely brunette, adventurous and eager to please seeks intelligent male to share the fun side of life together. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416521 ☺

ANNE, mid 40's, cheerful busty curvy affectionate real woman! Seeks gent, any age or looks for nights at mine. Tel No: 0905 002 1953 Box No: 410291

CHRISTINE 48, shy sensitive brunette looking for lively older male to make her smile again and bring back some passion. s Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416519 ☺

DISCREET lady, 42yrs wants to make you happy, come to me and let me do that for you. ACA. Tel No: 0905 002 1957 Box No: 409901

BEAUTIFUL full figured, down to earth black woman, 37, looking for some serious fun with an experienced, confident, older guy. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416499 ☺

TARA, confident lady, long legs, long hair, seeks a saucy man of any age for daytimes, no strings fun. Tel No: 0905 002 1913 Box No: 414701

SINCERE lady, seeks similar gent, widower preferred, 60-67, 5ft 6ins, so slightly taller than me, N/S, car owner and likes a dog. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416471

KELLY, 42yrs, loves to chat and flirt with guys on-line and by text. Box No: 4656847 ☺

KAREN 5ft 5ins, blonde hair, blue eyes, slim, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416337 ☺

STACY, 51yrs, new to area, hopes to meet new friends, any age for fun and friendship. Box No: 4656848 ☺

JUNE 50, beautiful, funny, warm, young looking blonde WLTm attractive down to earth male for no strings fun, laughter and love. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416299 ☺

MARY, 32yrs, attractive brunette loves older mature gents who have lots of interests. Box No: 4656849 ☺

SHELLY 36, tiny shy brunette seeks down to earth, sensitive, older male to snuggle up, share a bottle of wine with and pamper. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416235 ☺

CAROLINE, sophisticated feminine lady, just turned 40 and wants to meet new friends. Box No: 4656850 ☺

GWEN middle aged, 65-75, 5ft 2ins, likes theatre, country music, holidays, seeks N/S male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415785



KATHERINE 33, pretty blonde would love to get intimate with outgoing, fit guy who is also looking for fun relationship with no strings. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416197 ☺

JANE, bored at home, doesn't get out much and wants flirty chats, she's 39 but looks younger. Box No: 4656851 ☺

FEMALE fun brunette, attractive, 26, seeking male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416287 ☺

MINDY, American lady moved to UK and looking to meet British chap for chats, fun, more. Box No: 4656853 ☺

PAT 5ft 2ins, medium build, attractive, blonde hair, widow, seeking N/S, sincere gent for friendship and days out. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416057

SOPHIE is 35yrs, blonde, attractive, chatty and flirtations. Please text if you want to hear more. Box No: 4656854 ☺

ALICE 36, tall and slim with long brown hair, outgoing and sporty seeks funny, intelligent guy to share active days and cosy nights. Age/looks not important. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416087 ☺

LINDY, broadminded mid 40's lady loves to chat about anything with anyone. Box No: 4656858 ☺

DIANE 37, sensual, tactile and loving seeks tall male for interesting conversations and cosy intimate nights together. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416085 ☺

BARBARA, caring lady, 54yrs, doesn't get out much, works nights, looking for daytime chats with men any age. Box No: 4656855 ☺

BRIDGET 48, voluptuous, seductive and very saucy, seeks male for lots of TLC and to make very happy in return. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416083 ☺

ATTRACTIVE tall, dark, professional gent, GSOH, likes sports, socialising, good company, seeking female with GSOH for laughs, conversation and maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415969

ATTRACTIVE professional widow, 73, WLTm sincere caring gent, widower for friendship, meals in, conversation and to put a smile on our faces. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415951

MALE young 62, medium build, likes sports, golf, holidays, food, beer, seeks lady for nights out. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416643 ☺

MATURE slim male, 6 ft tall, good physique, brown hair/eyes, solvent, ohac, wtm slim female any age/status for fun times. Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4654009 ☺

MALC 50, seeking adventurous, spontaneous, sensual female, 50-65 for adult fun and good times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415253 ☺

GLYNN 49, young looking, seeks black female, 21-30 for loving relationship and fun. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416603 ☺

SINGLE male 42, looking for an older lady. Leek area. Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4650344 ☺

STEVEN 64, WLTm princess to see if the frog kits really works, caring, considerate, N/S preferred. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416417

PETE 47yrs, 5ft 11, medium build, dark brown eyes and passionate, seeks slim female 30 - 60 to brighten up my life. Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4657891

PHILIP, widowed single dad with 2 teenage girls, solvent, own teeth hair! WLTm single mum of any age to spoil. Box No: 4656852 ☺

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Tributes to footballer who travelled the world



Passionate about fitness and sport, particularly football — Ron Corbett, second right at front, in an RAF team from the 1960s

A FOOTBALL coach from Dudley, whose love of the beautiful game took him around the world to train aspiring players, has died at 76.

Ron Corbett was passionate about sports from an early age becoming a boxing champion while still attending Dudley Grammar School. He died on February 26 at Russells Hall Hospital. His funeral will be held at Gornal Crematorium today (Thursday) at 9.40am.

Daughter Jacqui Crump said even though battling dementia, her father

still tried to keep himself fit. He was born on the Priory estate and as a teenager played for Wolves, West Bromwich Albion and Dudley Town.

During National Service he played for RAF and Combined Services football teams and was a semi-pro player during the 1960s at Kidderminster, Lye and Lower Gornal, before managing Brierley Hill Alliance and Oldswinford. He also had stints at Kidderminster Harriers as assistant manager and manager of Solihull Borough.

In the 1980s he coached in America, the Faroe Islands and spoke with fondness of his time coaching in Jamaica.



Former football coach Ron Corbett

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Awards to recognise carers for hard work and generosity

CARERS who look after others will themselves be the focus when an awards ceremony is held in their honour this summer.

In Dudley alone there are 38,000 carers so the charity WeLoveCarers, based at Brierley Hill, will be celebrating their work with the awards bash. The night will see prizes presented to carers who look after parents, children or a spouse who may have a disability or condition.

The first awards ceremony was held last year, in which 12 people received a glass award made by at The Glasshouse College in Stourbridge. Prizes were given in categories including Young Carer of the Year, Care of an Adult, Care of a Child and a Support Group award.

WeLoveCarers chief executive Marc Carter said the event will be

held at the charity's Insight House HQ on June 12. He said: "We are doing this to raise awareness of the carers and of our charity."

Mr Carter described the awards night as an opportunity for carers to celebrate their achievements and enjoy entertainment and food.

The charity provides support for carers, including groups and information sessions, and carers can drop in for a cup of coffee and a chat.

However, the organisation does not receive any financial support from the Government and relies instead on money raised through a coffee lounge at the HQ, as well as revenue from hiring out rooms at the building for conferences, wedding receptions and other events.

Nominations have to be in by May 1, phone 01384 483708 for a form.



Get nominating — Marc Carter and Loraine Stockton of WeLoveCarers with forms for potential award winners

Madonna tour is coming to Brum

SOON after recovering from her dramatic fall at the BRIT Awards, pop icon Madonna has announced a new tour including a Birmingham date in December.

Just days after her fall at the end of the Brits sparked headlines around the world, when a cape dragged her into a backwards tumble during a dance routine, the Queen of Pop's Rebel Heart tour was announced for 35 cities in Europe.

Madonna will perform at the Barclaycard Arena, the former NIA, on December 16. Tickets go on sale on March 16.

Whiplash

The singer, 56, revealed that she suffered whiplash injuries in her BRITs fall when her red and black Armani cape was tied too tightly around her neck. "I smacked the back of my head," she told Jonathan Ross, on his show to be broadcast on Saturday.

Madonna released her 13th studio album Rebel Heart on Monday. It was new single Living For Love which she performed as she tumbled in front of millions of viewers.

Action call after body bungle at MEP funeral

ANSWERS were being demanded after the wrong body was cremated at the funeral of West Midlands MEP Philip Bradbourn.

Mr Bradbourn, who was born in Tipton and lived in Wolverhampton, died in December at Sutton Coldfield's Good Hope Hospital after a battle with cancer.

His funeral took place in January at Wolverhampton's Bushbury Crematorium. However, the man who was cremated was in fact Philip Bradburn, who had passed away at University Hospital Birmingham before Christmas.

Both men's bodies went to Central England Co-operative Funeralcare mortuary but the wrong body was released for cremation at Bushbury on January 16.

A second funeral took place last month. On Monday this week, senior politicians including community secretary Eric Pickles and transport secretary Patrick McLoughlin gathered at Wolverhampton's St Peter's Collegiate Church for a memorial service.

The 63-year-old, who was not married, was diagnosed with bowel cancer shortly after being re-elected to the European Parliament in May last year.

Investigation

Fellow Tory West Midlands MEP Anthea McIntyre said: "I was shocked that this could have happened. There must be an investigation."

"I find it hard to believe and I feel terribly sorry for anyone who knew the other person, as well as those close to Phil."

Mr McLoughlin said: "I have known Phil for 30 or 40 years. We were in the West Midlands Young Conservatives together so we go back a long way."

"We also both contested the Wolverhampton South East seat, me in 1983, and Phil in 1992."

"He was a stalwart of the Conservative Party in this area and I was very sad to hear of his death."

Heart of England Foundation Trust, which runs Good Hope Hospital, said it was carrying out a full investigation into a recent incident, involving two people with similar names, as a result of which the wrong deceased patient was cremated.



Euro MP Philip Bradbourn

Services have been held for both of the deceased.

Dr Andrew Catto, executive medical director and interim deputy chief executive, said: "This is an incredibly distressing situation and we are very sorry that this has happened. We are carrying out a full and urgent investigation between all the parties involved. This is a rare incident and we are offering support to those close to the deceased."

"Once the Trust became aware, it acted immediately. We are committed to finding out precisely what happened and reducing the possibility of it happening again."

"This occurred in spite of the fact that mortuary procedures conform to nationally defined standards and are subject to periodic audit."

"We are committed to supporting the request for privacy in this matter from those close to the deceased."

A spokesman for Central England Co-operative Funeralcare said: "The Society's Funeralcare operation provides services to a number of hospitals within the Birmingham area, but it is not our policy to comment on behalf of any of these organisations."

"The Society is supporting one of our partners in a full and open an investigation, but is not able to comment further while the investigation is ongoing."

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Lessons are plain sailing for sixth form students

PUPILS at a Dudley secondary school are being encouraged to get out on the open water after it became one of the first in the region to make sailing part of its curriculum.

With their efforts inside the classroom delivering impressive results, bosses at Ellowes Hall School in Lower Gornal decided they would take advantage of their relationship with Himley Hall Sailing Club.

The sport has been part of the school's enrichment programme for the last year but staff have now taken the extra step of making it a permanent fixture on the timetable.

The offer will initially be open to sixth formers before being rolled out to younger pupils.

Two new sailing boats have been bought by the school, costing around £13,000, they have been named Aspire and Achieve after the school's motto.

Headteacher Alan Jasper said: "We try to be forward thinking and provide as many opportunities as we possibly can. We are relatively close to Himley Hall Sailing Club and thought it was something we could do and had members of staff who were keen to help out."

Dudley North MP Ian Austin paid a visit to the sailing club as the new boats were unveiled.

He praised the school for its focus on sport as well as getting results in the classroom.



Head teacher Andy Griffiths, Ian Austin MP, Tony Sutton, students Holly Holloway and, right, Maia Shillam

Dudley tops energy over spending in the region

FAMILIES in the West Midlands will over-spend on their energy bills by £354 million this year.

According to new research, £3.4 billion is being unnecessarily spent on energy across the UK due to variable tariffs.

Unsurprisingly, London tops a list of 100 cities and major towns with the biggest overspenders. But it's Dudley that comes in 13th place with £21.8m, followed by Walsall in 19th place with £20m, Wolverhampton in 22nd with £18.5m and Stafford in 65th with £9.6m.

In total, 70 per cent of the Big Six energy company customers are overpaying by an average of £235 per year in the UK when compared to the cheapest fixed tariffs on the market.

Independent energy company First Utility said the research it commissioned showed that 80 per cent of bill payers would find it useful to have more information about cheaper tariffs from their existing supplier and those from others in the market.

Shocking

A similar percentage also said that more transparent bills and more information about the best tariffs available would increase their level of trust in energy companies.

Sarah Willingham, consumer champion at Lets-SaveMoney.com, said: "It's upsetting and shocking to see just how much money we are wasting in the UK by paying more than we need to for our energy."

"Traditionally the energy companies have not done enough to help consumers

By John Corser

get onto the best tariff and to save money."

Ian McCaig, chief executive of First Utility, said: "The UK energy industry has contrived to put itself in a situation where around two thirds of its customers are on the most expensive energy tariff the industry has to offer, namely the 'standard variable tariff'."

"That simply can't be right and is even more inexcusable in a climate where wholesale prices have been coming down."

"First Utility believes that the industry needs to change from within and do more to inform and support customers to help them make informed choices about the best tariff."

"A big step would be to scrap the standard variable tariff and call it what it is — the 'Out of Contract Tariff', the tariff you're left on when you're not on one of the good ones."

"Just as importantly, every household should be told in writing every single month whether there's a better, cheaper tariff for them anywhere across the entire industry."

Jan's the man for Rotary Club dinner

FORMER Liverpool Football Club star Jan Molby is appearing at a charity sportsman's dinner in Wolverhampton tonight (Thursday), organised by Dudley Rotary Club.

The legendary Danish midfielder, famed for his silky skills and his strong Scouse accent, will be star guest at the Molineux event.

Molby won both the league and FA Cup three times with Liverpool during his 12-year Anfield career and went on to have two spells managing Kidderminster Harriers.

Comedian

The black tie event has been organised by Dudley Rotary Club and will also feature comedian Billy Flywheel and John Collier. Tickets cost £50 each.

For tickets or more information contact Keith Law on 01384 566266 or e-mail keithlaw53@hotmail.co.uk



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Concern at smell from old flowers

COUNCIL bosses have come under fire over a remembrance garden.

Sandwell Council said it would remove dead flowers left in vases at Rowley Regis Crematorium. It comes after couple George and Lilian Johnson visited from Kidderminster, only to leave 'incensed' at the foul smell of stagnant water and dead flowers.

The couple had visited to lay flowers in memory of Mrs Johnson's father. Mrs Johnson, 70, originally from Langley, said: "The smell from the vases is atrocious"

Council leader Darren Cooper said: "We routinely remove dead flowers at both Rowley Regis and Sandwell Valley Crematoria but are mindful there are many instances where families visit weekly and often prefer to remove and replace floral tributes themselves."

Warning on derelict site

FIREFIGHTERS have pleaded with people to stay out of a derelict unit in Rowley Regis after being called out three times in two days to extinguish blazes.

Crews from Haden Cross Station put out fires at the site in Doulton Road on Monday and Tuesday of last week.

Watch commander Justin Bayliss said: "I want to encourage people to stay out of the site. It is a dangerous place."

FOCUS ON BLACKHEATH AND ROWLEY REGIS

Mother runs to raise cash for potential lifesaver gear

Group help Loaves 'N' Fishes

A CHARITY which helps provide furniture and household goods for needy people has been boosted by a cash donation.

More than £17,000 has been donated to Blackheath-based charity Loaves 'N' Fishes by the Black Country Housing Group.

The social housing group has worked to raise £8,786 for the charity through a football tournament, cake sales and a gala ball. Bosses have agreed to match-fund the amount raised, bringing the total to £17,572.

Loaves 'N' Fishes provides furniture and household essentials as well as clothing to families and individuals who need help.

Volunteers at the organisation say the cash will help them build a workshop to repair and renovate furniture donation.

Each of the housing group's 200 staff will also donate two hours of their time to the charity.



Black Country Housing Group's Amanda Tomlinson and Ramesh Malhan with Anna Hartland and Steve Hartland from Blackheath-based charity Loaves 'N' Fishes

A MOTHER will be putting her best foot forward in a marathon to raise money for a defibrillator for a primary school.

Jennifer White, 41, who lives in Downing Street, Halesowen, but is originally from Blackheath, will be running the Brighton marathon in April, aiming to raise more than £800 towards a new defibrillator for Newfield Park Primary School in Halesowen.

The device delivers a shock to the heart of a cardiac arrest victim to enable the heart to resume its normal rhythm.

Mrs White has two children at the school, Lily Armstrong, nine, and Noah Armstrong, eight, and said she was inspired to raise money for the defibrillator after discovering that 12 children die from sudden cardiac arrest on a typical week in the UK.

She added many of them did not have pre-existing heart conditions and suddenly collapsed, so a defibrillator could make a difference.

"I decided that if I was going to do a marathon, I wanted it to be for a worthwhile cause and my twins start at Newfield Park in September and I wanted it to be something that would benefit my children and somebody else's children," she said.

"The new defibrillator



Jennifer White — good cause will be kept in the community and will be available for the local community to use."

Mrs White, who used to live in American and for a while in Brighton, lives with her husband Anthony Armstrong, 40, and also has twins Scarlett and Georgia Armstrong, aged five.

Her training involves regular runs and weight training twice a week.

To sponsor Mrs White contact Newfield Primary on 01384 818640.

Up to £2m for services at hospital

UP to £2 million will be spent expanding services at Rowley Regis Hospital.

Bosses at Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust want to offer a wider range of clinics and facilities at the Moore Lane site.

They say it will mean more people can get treatment closer to home rather than having to travel to Sandwell Hospital or Russells Hall Hospital.

A consultation is under way to find out what services the public would like to be available. Ideas put forward so far include a pharmacy, midwifery services, such as antenatal and postnatal clinics, and respiratory therapy. Improved gym facilities and space for support groups to help patients and families have also been suggested.

Chief executive Toby Lewis said the trust expected to invest up to £2m by 2016.

Councillor's bus concern

A COUNCILLOR has questioned whether new bus routes will benefit the people who need them most. The services will take passengers to Merry Hill shopping centre, Halesowen and Blackheath.

Sandwell councillor Kerrie Carmichael, who represents Blackheath, said elderly residents in Grange Road would have to walk up Gorsty Hill Road to catch the bus, whereas previously the service stopped in Station Road.

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T. Hadley & Co was founded in 1895 by Thomas Hadley, then passed to his grandson Les Hadley in the late 1940's. The company was purchased by local funeral director Trevor Hickton in 1987 after a long standing professional relationship between Les and Trevor.

After being located in New John Street, Blackheath since the early 1900's, the office was relocated to more prominent position in Blackheath High Street in 2010.

Melanie Unwin Dip.FD was given the position of Branch manager and oversees the day to day running of the office as well as looking after the families on the day of the funeral, she is assisted by Funeral Administrator Angela on a daily basis.

As a funeral directors we offer a wide selection of funeral services throughout Blackheath, Rowley Regis, Hurst Green, Sandwell, Dudley and all surrounding areas. You can reach us 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and we will always assist you with your funeral service needs.

We offer advice on prepaid funeral plans. A funeral plan can save you money and provides invaluable peace of mind for you and your family. The reassurance gained from making arrangements in advance and these escalating costs are the reasons why nearly a million people in Britain have taken out a funeral plan.

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Dan gets claws into banjo style

INTERVIEW

by Danny Farragher

MIDLANDS musician Dan Walsh is considered the best clawhammer, five-string banjo player these isles have produced.

However, it was sheer fluke which started him on his journey to being a world renowned player.

Walsh, now aged 27, from Baswich, Stafford, began his musical journey as a pre-teen enamoured of the guitar.

"I started playing guitar when I was about nine or ten and that was the dream, the guitar was where it was at, that is what I always wanted to do.

"But then I got into Irish and Scottish music and heard the banjo and thought I would give it a go, I never really thought it would become the main instrument — just an extra to the guitar, but within a year it was what I was best at."

Accident

This was where fate took a hand. "Choosing the five-string banjo was a complete accident," laughs Walsh. "When I was 13, no one in Stafford really knew anything about banjos.

"I just heard it and thought I wanted to play it. I had no idea there were different banjos or different ways of playing them. I just fancied the sound.

"So my parents went to the local music shop and asked if they knew anyone who taught banjo, they were given the name of a guy from Cannock, George Davies.

"I owe him everything. He was the best teacher I could have ever had.

"When he mentioned teaching me clawhammer style it meant nothing to me, so I ended up playing five string and it wasn't until about year later I realised I had ended up playing the wrong instrument. I realised the music and banjo I had been listening



Dan Walsh with his five-string banjo which has earned him world renown

to was the tenor, but by then it was a bit late to change.

"So then I had to find a way to play that kind of music (Irish/Scottish) clawhammer style which became something of a niche for me, so I can't claim it was planned at all. But I am very glad it happened."

Walsh went on to study folk music at degree level in Newcastle upon Tyne which and he stayed in the North East for a couple of years after graduating before coming back to his home town.

Fresh

Although armed with a new knowledge of the music he played it was his previous lack of understanding about the banjo that was instrumental in his development and enthusiasm for the keeping things fresh and experimental.

"I never really had a specific idea of what the banjo did when I took it up. I had never heard of bluegrass so I never really had the firm idea of what it could do, and I think that's proba-

bly never really left me. It became a never-ending experiment and I felt there was so much that hadn't been done with it that I could take it in new directions.

"I remember meeting some Indian musicians in London and the music just blew my mind. It just immediately struck a chord with me and I really wanted to study the music, and I play the banjo, so it never occurred to me not to do it on the banjo."

This has also spurred something of a crusade in the musician to bring more banjo music to the masses.

"I guess I am on a bit of a crusade. I don't go out thinking this is banjo music and YOU ARE going to enjoy it, but I do like to win people round."

His new album Incidents & Accidents is due out on March 16

Dan Walsh performs at The Woodman Folk Club, Kingswinford on Friday from around 8.30pm. Entry is £6 for members and £1 extra for non-members. He then plays The Met at Gatehouse, Stafford on March 17 at 8pm. Tickets are £10.

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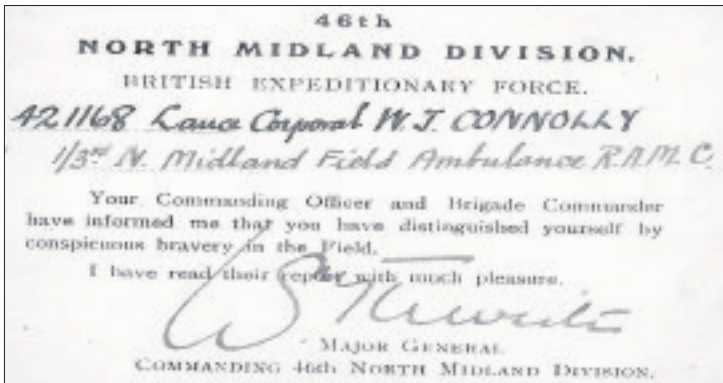
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William, with his Military Medal, and Lillian after he was injured



The postcard from Major General Thwaites, mentioning the medic's conspicuous bravery



L/Cpl Connolly with his wife, Lillian, during the Great War

Army medic was pride of town

THE 137th Staffordshire Brigade made a vital and momentous contribution to the defeat of the Germans in the First World War when it broke the much-vaunted and formidable Hindenburg Line on the St Quentin Canal at Belleglise.

This was the last German defensive barrier on the Western Front and it was stormed by soldiers drawn mostly from in and around Wolverhampton, Walsall, Burton-on-Trent and Hanley.

That victorious Brigade belonged to the 46th North Midland Division. It was one of the 14 peace-time divisions of the Territorial Force, which had been organised in 1908 with the aim of training part-time soldiers for home defence in the event of war.

As for the 137th Staffordshire Brigade it was made up of four battalions: two each from North and South Staffordshire. The 5th South Staffordshire Regiment had its headquarters and four companies at Walsall, with other companies at Bloxwich, Hednesford, Handsworth and Wednesbury; the 6th battalion was based in Wolverhampton, where it had three companies, with others in Willenhall, Sedgley, Darlaston, Bilston and Tettenhall. Its main recruiting

MEMORY LANE

Report by Carl Chinn

centre was at the Drill Hall in Stafford Street, Wolverhampton. The Brigade was made up not only of infantrymen and gunners but also of engineers and medics, who belonged to the Field Ambulance of Royal Army Medical Corps.

Among the Wolverhampton men of the 1/3rd North Midland Field Ambulance was Lance Corporal William J Connolly, Army number 421168. He was actively involved in the final months of the war, which began in March 1918 when General Ludendorff launched the German Spring offensive as a last attempt to gain victory.

Its initial successes were dramatic and demoralising, but after the Germans were finally repulsed in their attempts to capture Amiens, Ludendorff shifted his attacks to the north and the Ypres Salient in Flanders. In the Battle of Lys, his troops made significant gains but a final drive to capture the Channel ports was repulsed on April 29.

With the battle still raging, the next evening L/Cpl Connolly was the duty NCO at an advanced dressing station near to Gorre, a hamlet just to the east of Bethune that had been

turned into a support post. That night and into the next day, it was heavily bombed with mustard gas shells by the enemy. Distinguishing himself with conspicuous bravery, L/Cpl Connolly was awarded the Military Medal on August 30. The citation read that he 'remained at duty, despite incessant vomiting, till he could neither see or stand. His courage and devotion to duty was a good example to the men of the unit, and to the gassed men of other units who were passing through the dressing station'.

Having lost much of his sight, the valourous Wulfrunian was eventually moved to Bellahouston Hospital in Glasgow. Here he was visited by his wife of six months, Lillian, from whom he had been parted two days after their wedding.

After his recovery, Bill Connolly returned to Wolverhampton and was presented with 'a beautiful gold pocket watch' which his granddaughter Elizabeth Thompson is proud to have.

Elizabeth is keen to know if this watch 'was presented at a special ceremony and whether any other Wolverhampton men won medals and were given such a gift by the town'. She explains that before the Great War, her grandfather was 'a skilled Art Metal Worker, having served as an apprentice with F.J.J Gibbons from July 22, 1907 to April 23, 1911'. Elizabeth remembers that because of the mustard gas, her grandfather's 'chest and lungs were badly damaged'.

She adds: 'His eyesight was also impaired and I believe that he was the first person to have a corneal graft operation at Wolverhampton and West Midlands Eye Infirmary.' This came about because in 1942, Bill had a piece of grit removed from his left eye at the Infirmary. During the examination of his eye it was discovered that there was something else seriously wrong with his eye - the mustard gas had badly affected his cornea.

Bill began to go blind as his right eye was also impaired and then in 1951 a young German went to the Infirmary suffering from a tumour. However, the cornea remained healthy and after his eye was removed he gave permission for it to be grafted onto Bill's left eye.

Then the doctors turned their attention to Bill's right eye. Then in December 1952 another German walked into the Infirmary. He had to have his eye removed but also helped the Englishman. A few days later Bill had an operation and for several days afterwards lay in bed with his eyes covered in bandages until a nurse did not replace them in quite the usual way.

In his words, Bill 'took a sly peep' and was filled with great joy. He could see to the end of the room 'like a brilliantly lit theatre. The wheel had gone full circle. The debt had been repaid in full. The Germans who had deprived him of his sight had given him back his sight'.



William Connolly in his uniform

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Police launch recruitment drive for 200 constables

Gym in a real spin to help the hospice



With the collection buckets are Jess Day-Bradley and Ffynona Stanley in the Trident Shopping Centre, Dudley

CUSTOMERS and staff at a Dudley gym got into a spin for a good cause when they took part in a spin-a-thon in aid of Acorns Children's Hospice.

The teams cycled for more than 13 hours when they held two community days last month at Active4Less in Trident Shopping Centre.

Organisers also held a bucket collection in the centre. Active4Less director Julie Ryan said: "It was a fun event. It went really well."

"We really felt that we were doing something worthwhile for the community."

"The young representative from Acorns certainly enjoyed trying out the spin bikes for the first time. The riders cycled solidly for three hours."

The club's instructors Jess Day-Bradley, Ffynona Stanley and Sham Stanley also took part in the event.

"We are independently owned with an ethos to support local community projects and charities," added Mrs Ryan.

Driver has lucky escape after railings crash

A DRIVER escaped with just a cut finger despite his car crashing and becoming impaled on metal railings in Stourbridge.

The car also demolished two garden walls in Envile Street, Wollaston, in the early hours accident last week.

The incident has prompted pleas to improve safety on the street near Katie Fitzgerald's pub opposite the junction with Mable Road.

Fire crews from Stourbridge and Brierley Hill attended following a call from police. Metal railings smashed through the driver side windows of the car, narrowly missing the motorist.

Resident Kevin Woodward said he was woken up by the accident and saw the aftermath.

"I've only had the wall rebuilt by the council a few days ago and now it is damaged again," he said.

"There have been accidents down here before. We want the council to have a look at it."

Councillor Barlow said he had emailed Dudley Council transport officers to urge them to look at introducing safety measures.

Stourbridge firefighters at the scene tweeted that the driver had been 'lucky to escape' the stricken Nissan Micra.

WEST Midlands Police has launched the drive for 200 new constables with a three-week recruiting window opening later this month.

The successful applicants will start training in November as the second batch of a total of 450 officers announced by former Police and Crime Commissioner Bob Jones before his death last year.

The first 200-strong intake have been posted to police stations after completing their 18-week training programme.

They will remain as probationary officers alongside more experienced staff for a further 18 months.

More than 4,000 people applied for those jobs and the force is bracing itself for a similar rush this time.

Chief Inspector Kevin Doyle, in

By John Scott

charge of the recruitment drive, said: "Before this started in February last year, the force had experienced a five-year freeze. The new application process continues to search for fresh, new and diverse recruits."

Impressed

"We have been very impressed with the calibre of the candidates from last year's intake who have far exceeded our expectations and raised the bar high."

"Policing is challenging and rewarding. As a constable you will get to learn new skills and meet new people. As well as reducing crime, you will help to reduce the fear of crime by providing reassurance, inspiring con-

fidence and really making a difference to people's lives."

Those interested can formally apply during a three-week period beginning on March 23 but are encouraged to register interest now online. Those chosen will need to complete two years as a probationary officer.

West Midlands Police said potential applicants should have a passion for public service and a desire to make a difference in the region's communities.

Other attributes being sought are good communication skills, calm, confident personalities, problem solving and an ability to easily build relationships, be a team player and respect other people.

The force is specifically aiming to increase the number of black and minority ethnic officers to better reflect the communities it serves.

Big Switch set to save £300 on energy bills

RESIDENTS who signed up for a new energy scheme look to save an average of almost £300 per home on their bills, say the boss of Dudley Council.

The Big Switch has now closed and following an auction between energy companies the average savings have been announced.

The council partners for the auction with IChooser, the UK's leading expert in collective energy switching.

A total of 536 households registered with the scheme. It was combined with a number of other similar initiatives across the UK to create a collective of 30,000 households, led by over 100 councils.

In total 85 per cent of Dudley borough house-

holds who registered for the auction will save on their energy bills. The average saving per household will be almost £300.

Councillor Pete Lowe, leader of Dudley Council, said: "The two winning suppliers for the latest Big Switch are E.ON and Scottish Power who will supply a range of energy contracts. All the tariffs offered are market leading and exclusive to scheme members. These rates are not available direct from the suppliers or via price comparison services. The average savings per household really will help our residents."

Those who registered will receive a personal offer.

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Tony Maudsley as Edna

BENIDORM star Tony Maudsley will be putting on the big frock to play Edna Turnblad in the return of feel-good 1960s musical Hairspray!

Maudsley will be swapping hairdryers for ham dinners when the Hotel Solano's chief crimper takes on the role of the maxi-sized mom of high school rebel Tracy Turnblad.

The touring show has been chosen as the festive season musical treat at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre, from December 14 to January 9.

Motormouth

Joining him in the cast will be actor and former Blue Peter host Peter Duncan as Mr Turnblad, West End star Claire Sweeney as the wicked Wasp Velma Von Tussle and former X Factor finalist and We Will Rock You showstopper Brenda Edwards as Motormouth Maybelle.

Freya Sutton will reprise her role as the irrepressible Tracy after starring in the 2013 tour.

Sir Tom joining the bill for a 'Made in Britain' V Festival

EastEnders has tough new role

TO millions of TV viewers he is known as soft-hearted Barry from EastEnders but theatre goers in Wolverhampton will soon see Shaun Williamson play as a tough guy.

He stars in 1960s-set farce One Man, Two Guvnors from Tuesday, March 17, to Saturday, March 22, at the Grand Theatre.

Williamson played in the BBC soap between 1994 and 2004 as Barry Evans, who was dramatically killed off when his lover Janine Butcher pushed him off a cliff. But 11 years later, the actor plays Charlie Clench in a show which is a glorious celebration of British comedy.

"I always enjoy coming to Wolverhampton, it's a beautiful theatre," he said. "The show is incredible and probably one of the funniest things I have been a part of in my career. It's like an adult pantomime meeting a Carry On film."



Shaun Williamson as a gangster in One Man Two Guvnors

MUSIC legend Sir Tom Jones will be playing alongside chart toppers Kasabian and Calvin Harris at this summer's V Festival.

Grammy and 2015 BRIT winner Sam Smith, fellow BRIT winner Paloma Faith, Ellie Goulding and Welsh rockers Stereophonics and Paloma Faith are also on the bill in a home-grown line-up to celebrate the festival's 20th anniversary.

The event will be held at Weston Park on the weekend of August 22 and 23, with a mirror image V taking place over the same weekend at Hylands Park in Chelmsford, Essex.

Headlining on the Saturday at Weston Park will be Scottish DJ Calvin Harris and V regulars Stereophonics. They will be joined by The Script, Ellie Goulding, Paloma Faith, George Ezra, The Kooks, Clean Bandit, Chvrches, Kodakone, Ella Henderson, Jessie Ware, Duke Dumont, Gregory Porter, Ella Eyre and Irish rockabilly singer Imelda May.

Sunday will see Sir Tom joined by Leicester rockers Kasabian, Sam Smith, Olly Murs, Irish singer/songwriter Hozier, Courteeners, Nero, Annie Mac, Labrinth, Andy C, Jess Glynne, Fuse ODG, Marina & The Diamonds, Hannah Wants, Reverend & The Makers, Scottish folk/pop singers The Proclaimers and hip hop legends Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five.

British

Festival director Simon Moran said: "We wanted to champion British talent at this year's festival and with the likes of Calvin and Kasabian leading the way we don't think it'll disappoint."

"The eclectic mix of established artists and rising stars, with a few more in the pipeline, means that once again there is something for everyone at V Festival."

"It's incredible to think what V has achieved in two decades. When we started out in '96, we were two stages and one tent, with the northern site only hosting one day of acts. Since then we've hosted some of the most iconic acts from around the world."



Sir Tom, now a judge on TV's The Voice

Most festival-goers will be spending around £199 on weekend tickets including camping.

But those with a bigger budget will again be able to try something more upmarket with ready-built bell tents, huts and luxury yurts.

More acts will be announced soon to perform on the festival's four stages and in the Glee Club comedy tent.

Off stage there will be other entertainment including a silent disco on the Friday and Saturday nights, food and drink stalls for weekend campers, and funfair rides.

Tickets went on sale on Friday.

Let it go and sing along with Frozen

DISNEY'S Frozen is a phenomenal success. Inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's The Snow Queen, the Disney studio's 53rd animated feature has become a billion dollar box office blockbuster.

Fans of the story about Princesses Elsa and Anna will join in with their favourite movie at Sing-a-Long-a Disney's Frozen at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre on Sunday. It's so popular that all three showings have sold out but it will return for two performances on May 25.

If your little ones prefer dinosaurs to Disney, prehistoric puppets ensure it's a Jurassic lark at Birmingham Hippodrome for Dinosaur Zoo at the Hurst Street venue from tomorrow (Friday) to Sunday.

It's a Special night at the Glee Club

DREADLOCKED Northern Irish singer/songwriter Duke Special is in concert at Birmingham Glee Club on Sunday.

The singer and pianist (born Peter Wilson) has collaborated with Clannad, written songs for an exhibition at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art and appeared in a Brecht play at the National Theatre.

His most recent single is Elephant Graveyard and he comes to the Arcadian Centre venue three weeks before the release of latest album Look out Machines.

Californian singer/songwriter Brett Dennen, who toured with Paloma Faith, is at the Glee on April 15.

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FORTHCOMING HOLIDAYS

| DATE | LOCATION | PRICE |
|----------------|--|---------|
| 21st - 22nd | TOWER OF LONDON & HAMPTON COURT PALACE | £139.50 |
| 23rd - 27th | CHARMING SIDMOUTH | £299.50 |
| 28th - 29th | SCENIC SETTLE CARLSLE RAILWAY | £115.00 |
| 30th - 3rd APR | NORTH DEVON DELIGHTS | £229.50 |
| 3rd - 6th | EASTER IN PARIS & MONET'S GARDEN | £275.00 |
| 8th - 12th | OLDE-WORLDE SHANKLIN - ISLE OF WIGHT | £359.50 |
| 13th - 17th | ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT | £289.50 |
| 17th - 19th | OSTEND WEEKEND & BRUGGE | £189.50 |
| 18th - 19th | IWM DUXFORD & BLETCHLEY PARK | £139.50 |
| 18th - 19th | GREAT ENGLISH GARDENS & PALACES | £129.50 |
| 24th - 26th | BEAUTIFUL BATH & STEAM RAILWAY | £199.50 |
| 25th - 26th | WORLD WAR 2 - BOMBERS & FIGHTERS | £119.50 |
| 27th - 1 MAY | SPRINGTIME IN ST IVES, CORNWALL | £279.50 |
| 3rd - 10th | SPRINGTIME IN PROVENCE | £749.50 |
| 4th - 7th | NORTHUMBRIAN COAST AND HOLY ISLAND | £239.50 |
| 9th - 10th | ROYAL ALBERT HALL WELSH MALE CHOIR | £139.50 |
| 11th - 15th | BOURNEMOUTH & NEW FOREST | £299.50 |
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| 21st - 22nd | CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW | £145.00 |

GREAT DAYS OUT

| DATE | LOCATION | Adult | Over 60's |
|------|---|--------|-----------|
| 17th | COTSWOLDS & AVEBURY MANOR (NT) | £35.00 | £32.50 |
| 19th | ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY FACTORY TOUR | £26.00 | £25.00 |
| 24th | CORONATION STREET "THE TOUR" | £45.00 | £42.50 |
| 1st | UPTON HOUSE & GARDENS (NT) | £34.00 | £33.00 |
| 7th | SS GREAT BRITAIN AND BRISTOL | £37.50 | £36.00 |
| 8th | SPRING BLOSSOM TRAIL & EYESHAM | £23.00 | £22.00 |
| 9th | HISTORY AND SCIENCE MUSEUMS LONDON | £27.00 | £26.00 |
| 21st | MORETON & BOURTON ON THE WATER | £25.00 | £24.00 |
| 22nd | ASCOTT HOUSE (NT) & AYLESBURY | £35.00 | £34.00 |
| 23rd | BATSFORD CHERRY TREE SPECTACULAR | £31.00 | £29.50 |
| 28th | ROMAN CITY OF BATH | £26.00 | £25.00 |
| 11th | MIDSOMER MURDERS COUNTRY | £26.00 | £25.00 |
| 12th | BOWOOD HOUSE RHODODENDRON WALK | £39.50 | £38.00 |
| 16th | TISSINGTON WELLS DRESSING AND BAKEWELL | £25.00 | £24.00 |
| 17th | HARRY POTTER STUDIO TOUR | £59.50 | £58.00 |
| 19th | BEAUMARIS & PUFFIN ISLAND CRUISE | £35.00 | £34.00 |
| 20th | ABERYSTWYTH & STEAM RAILWAY | £39.50 | £38.00 |
| 24th | GLOUCESTER DOCKS TALL SHIPS FESTIVAL | £26.00 | £25.00 |
| 16th | HIGHGROVE HOUSE GARDEN TOUR | £52.50 | £52.50 |

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CHOICE



Phillip Schofield

You're Back in the Room (ITV, 8.20pm)
New series. Phillip Schofield is joined by renowned illusionist Keith Barry in a game show where five strangers team up to win a potential £25,000 by completing apparently simple challenges. The only things standing between them and the money are their own minds – because they have all been hypnotised. Over the course of four rounds, the tasks get much harder as their hypnotic triggers cause the players to inadvertently sabotage their chances of winning. This week, celebrity chefs Lesley Waters, Paul Rankin, Ed Baines and Aldo Zilli join in the fun.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. 11.30 Mary Berry Cooks. (R) 12.00 BBC News: Weather. 12.10 Football Focus. 12.50 Formula 1: The Australian Grand Prix – Qualifying Highlights. 2.00 Live Six Nations Rugby Union. Wales v Ireland (Kick-off 2.30pm). 4.30 Live Six Nations Rugby Union. England v Scotland (Kick-off 5.00pm).
6.55 BBC News: Regional News; Weather.
7.15 The Voice UK. Emma Willis and Marvin Humes present the first of two knockout rounds this weekend, in which Rita Ora and Will.i.am reduce their teams down to the three acts that will perform in the live shows. The vocalists each choose a solo song and step into the spotlight for what could be the final time, knowing that five out of each group will be leaving disappointed at the end of the day. Continues tomorrow.
8.30 The National Lottery: Win Your Wish List. Shane Richie hosts the game show in which two contestants pick a selection of dream prizes to make up their personal wish lists, all of which have a connection to their shared history together. They then face categories of questions in an attempt to win their chosen items. Plus, the Lotto and Thunderball draws, presented by Gabby Roslin. Last in the series.
9.20 Casualty. Lily is involved in an accident on her way home from work when her moped collides with a schoolgirl – and when she admits she was tired, the youngster's father is furious. Has the young doctor jeopardised her career? The medics grow suspicious of a couple when urine tests on a mother and her baby bring up traces of amphetamines. Connie and Rita argue as the team continues to be overworked, while Cal steals money from Ethan for Taylor's charity.
10.10 BBC News: Weather.
10.30 Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents action from the latest Premier League fixtures, including Burnley v Manchester City at Turf Moor and Arsenal v West Ham United at the Emirates Stadium; National Lottery Update.
11.50 The Football League Show. Manish Bhasin presents.
1.10 EastEnders. 3.05 Weather for the Week Ahead. 3.10 BBC News.

BBC2

6.15 Film: Jules Verne's Rocket to the Moon. (1967) **8.10 Six Nations Rewind.** **9.10 Six Nations Rewind.** (R) 10.10 The Fred Dibnah Story. (R) 10.40 The Fred Dibnah Story. (R) 11.10 The Nature of Britain. (R) 12.00 A Taste of Britain. 12.30 James Martin's Food Map of Britain. (R) 12.55 Kenneth More: Talking Pictures. 1.25 Film: North West Frontier. (1959) Action adventure, starring Lauren Bacall and Kenneth More. 3.30 The Great British Sewing Bee. (R) 4.30 Final Score. 5.15 Flog It! (R)
6.00 Gardeners' World. Monty Don has advice on how to get the best out of hellebores, and Carol Klein visits a couple hoping to create the garden of their dreams over the coming year with her help. (R)
6.30 Afghanistan: A Service of Commemoration Highlights. Coverage of yesterday's ceremony at St Paul's Cathedral, where the Queen led a service to mark the end of combat operations in Afghanistan, followed by a parade and a fly-past paying tribute to everyone involved in the 13-year campaign. Huw Edwards presents.
7.30 How We Got to Now with Steven Johnson. The science author explores innovations in capturing and transmitting sound, including a look at the printer in France who first recorded the human voice. Last in the series.
8.30 Dad's Army. Captain Mainwaring is alarmed to discover the extent of butcher Corporal Jones's cash-flow crisis and takes drastic measures to help him. Comedy from 1975, starring Clive Dunn. (R)
9.00 Film: Hockney. (2014) Premiere. Documentary exploring the career of acclaimed artist David Hockney. The film uses previously unseen home movies and photographs taken from his personal archive to create a visual diary of Hockney's life, and examines his upbringing in working-class Bradford, his relocation to America, the influences on his work and his desire to escape categorisation.
10.45 Film: Enigma. (2001) A gifted mathematician employed to crack Germany's latest cipher fears a female colleague he has fallen for is a spy. Second World War drama, with Dougray Scott.
12.40 Film: Puppet on a Chain. (1971) 2.15 This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knockout Street. 6.10 Bottom Knockout Street. (R) 6.20 Bottom Knockout Street. (R) 6.35 Dino Dan. (R) 6.45 Dino Dan. (R) 7.00 Animals. (R) 7.10 Sooty. (R) 7.25 Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) 7.30 Scrambled!: Scrambled! 7.35 Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters. (R) 7.50 Scrambled!: Adventure Time. 8.30 Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. 8.50 Scrambled!: Hulk and the Agents of S.M.A.S.H. 9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 10.20 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 11.20 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 12.25 ITV News: Weather. 12.30 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 1.35 Tipping Point. (R) 2.35 Doc Martin. (R) 3.35 Secrets from the Sky. (R) 4.05 Off Their Rockers. (R) 4.35 Big Star's Little Star. (R) 5.35 Regional Programme: Weather. 5.45 ITV News: Weather.
6.00 You've Been Framed! Top 100 Weddings. Comedian Harry Hill narrates a countdown of 100 wedding-themed camcorder calamities and viewer-submitted mobile-phone clips. (R)
7.00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. The Georgie duo go head to head in this week's high-stakes round of Ant v Dec overseen by Ashley Roberts, Little Ant and Dec cause more mayhem and there's a spectacular End of the Show Show with tango masters Vincent Simone and Flavia Cacace. The Supercomputer hits the road again, and another member of the studio audience plays to win the contents of a commercial break.
8.20 You're Back in the Room. New series. Game show in which five strangers are hypnotised by Keith Barry and must tackle apparently simple challenges as a team, hoping to win £25,000. Phillip Schofield hosts.
9.20 The Jonathan Ross Show. A Madonna special in which the Queen of Pop talks about her infamous fall on stage at last month's Brit Awards, and performs two tracks from her new album Rebel Heart.
10.20 ITV News: Weather.
10.40 Film: Mercury Rising. (1998) An FBI agent shields an autistic child from government assassins after the boy cracks a supposedly unbreakable top-secret code. Thriller, starring Bruce Willis.
12.40 Jackpot247. 3.00 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) 3.40 ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.30 The Grid. 7.00 Cycling: Revolution Series. 8.00 The Morning Line. 9.00 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 9.30 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 10.00 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 10.30 Frasier. (R) 11.00 Frasier. (R) 11.30 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 12.00 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 12.30 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 1.00 Rude (ish) Tube. 1.30 Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Uttrother, Kempton Park and Lingfield Park. 4.15 Come Dine with Me. (R) 4.45 Come Dine with Me. (R) 5.15 Come Dine with Me. (R) 5.45 Come Dine with Me. (R)
6.15 The Simpsons. When Miss Hoover asks her students to research their family history, Lisa is distressed to discover that most of her forebears seem to have been crooks and deadbeats. (R)
6.40 Channel 4 News.
7.05 The Restoration Man. George Clarke revisits Nik Huddy and Vanessa Ford Robbins, who set out to transform a Victorian gate lodge in Surrey, but found they needed an extension to live there comfortably. (R)
8.00 The World's Wildest Weather. The mystery of red rain falling in Sri Lanka and India, how unusual weather is making Florida the sinkhole capital of the world, and strange lights in the sky that are baffling locals in a non-white Norwegian town. Plus, ready-made snowballs in Alaska, giant spiderwebs covering trees in Pakistan, shard of ice sprouting from the ground in someone's back garden, and an underwater city in Mexico.
9.00 Film: Bridesmaids. (2011) A disorganised woman is asked to be maid of honour at her best friend's wedding. Taking charge of the pre-nuptial celebrations, she resolves to give her pal and accompanying bridesmaids the time of their lives, but as her efforts slide into chaos she finds the wife of the groom's boss is keen to usurp her position. Comedy, with Kristen Wiig.
11.30 Film: True Lies. (1994) A computer salesman's wife is unaware her boring husband leads a double life as a secret agent. James Cameron's action comedy, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger.
2.00 The Million Pound Drop. (R) 2.55 Hollywood. (R) 5.05 Kirstie's Vintage Gems. (R) 5.20 Location, Location, Location. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! 10.25 SpongeBob SquarePants. 11.00 Film: Open Season 2. (2008) 12.30 Film: Hitch. (2005) Romantic comedy, starring Will Smith and Eva Mendes. 2.45 Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) 3.45 Benefits Britain: Life on the Dole. (R) 4.40 GPs: Behind Closed Doors. (R) 5.40 The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) 6.30 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. Repossession experts Mike Altonby and Terry Jones roam the streets, looking for cars belonging to people with outstanding unpaid loans. (R)
7.20 Police Interceptors. Hayley rushes to help two badly injured motorcyclists, while Ross and John haul in a drink-driver who has left a trail of destruction in his wake. Duncan has to escort a 178-wheel monster truck through Worthington, Steve deals with a boy racer, Tom goes undercover on the trail of some suspected bike thieves, and Duggie plays gooseberry on a couple's first date. (R)
8.15 5 News Weekend.
8.20 NCIS. A navy recruitment officer is murdered at a high school and the agents discover he had recently begun a relationship with a married teacher whose wife held a grudge against him. They also find out a student's father was vehemently opposed to his joining the military, and receive help from an unexpected quarter – Ducky's esteemed predecessor, Dr Magnus. (R)
9.15 NCIS. An ex-serviceman is beaten to death in his own back garden, and the agents are forced to consider the possibility his wife – a marine and martial arts expert – is the killer. (R)
10.10 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. The investigation of a man stabbed to death in an alley leads the team into a fetish scene in which people dress up as dolls in custom-made rubber suits.
11.05 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. The death of a marine who became pregnant by a rapist brings the unit into conflict with the Pentagon, and the case brings back painful memories of Benson's own sexual assault. (R)
12.05 SuperCasino. 3.10 Costa Del Casualty: Benidorm ER. (R) 4.00 The Boy They Call Fish: Extraordinary People. (R) 4.50 Make It Big. (R) 5.15 Angels of Jarm. (R) 5.40 Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Great Movie Mistakes IV: May the Fourth Be With You 7.30 Top Gear 8.30 Film: Real Steel (2011) 10.30 Russell Howard's Good News 11.00 Family Guy 12.55 Uncle 1.25 Bluestone 42 1.55 Russell Howard's Good News 2.51 Survived a Zombie Apocalypse 3.25 Great Movie Mistakes IV: May the Fourth Be With You
BBC Four
7.00 The Secret Life of Elephants 8.00 Lost Kingdoms of Central America 9.00 Hostages 10.55 The Joy of the Bee Gees 11.55 Bee Gees at the BBC and Beyond 12.55 Charlie Brooker's Weekly Wipe Extra 1.25 Top of the Pops: 1980 2.00 The Secret Life of Elephants 3.00 Lost Kingdoms of Central America 4.00 Close
ITV2
11.15 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway 12.40 Catchphrase 1.20 Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records 1.50 Film: Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) 3.40 Mr Bean 4.45 Film: The Smurfs (2011) 6.50 Film: Twins (1998) 9.00 Film: Rush Hour (1998) 11.00 The Keith Lemon Sketch Show 11.25 Reality Bites 12.10 Ibiza Weekend 1.20 Crazy Beaches 1.35 Hell's Kitchen 2.20 Fave Reaction 2.55 Teleshopping 5.55 ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
11.45 Jane Eyre 2.00 Film: Carry On Cruising (1962) 3.55 Wycliffe 5.00 Agatha Christie's Marple 7.00 Doc Martin 8.00 Foyle's War 10.05 Inspector Morse 12.25 A Touch of Frost 2.15 ITV3 Nightscreen 2.30 Teleshopping
ITV4
11.45 Counting Cars 12.45 Film: All Quiet on the Western Front (1930) 3.40 Storage Wars: Texas 4.10 Storage Wars 5.10 Film: Superman IV: The Quest for Peace (1987) 7.00 Live FIA Formula E Championship. The Miami ePrix. 9.30 Cricket World Cup Highlights 10.30 Film: Jaws 3 (1983) 12.30 Film: South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut (1999) 2.10 Hogan's Heroes 2.35 Movies Now 2.45 ITV4 Nightscreen 3.00 Teleshopping
E4
11.35 Marry Me 12.00 New Girl 1.00 Melissa & Joey 2.00 Baby Daddy 2.55 Film: Step Up (2006) 5.00 Troy 5.55 Rude (ish) Tube Shorts 6.00 The Big Bang Theory 10.00 The Inbetweeners 12.10 Rude Tube 1.15 Troy 2.15 The Inbetweeners 4.00 Taking New York 4.55 Make It or Break It Film4
11.00 Guadalcanal Diary (1943) 1.00 The Rocker (2008) 3.00 The First Wives Club (1996) 5.10 Star Trek: Insurrection (1998) 7.15 Jumper (2008) 8.00 Chronicle (2012) 10.40 Watchmen (2009) 1.50 Dark Star (1974) 3.35 Close

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CHOICE



Mr Selfridge (ITV, 9pm)
Harry is thrown when Nancy suddenly announces they should keep their relationship professional, at least until the Selfridge Estate is finished. A grieving Mr Grove is keen to carry on as normal, but continues to shun Miss Mardle, while Grace and Gordon have an embarrassing encounter with Mr Crabb. Victor and Elsa come up with a new idea for Colleano's, Violette catches the eye of a visiting French count, and a huge 'Britain at Play' promotion is launched in the store to keep the shareholders happy. Drama based on the life of Harry Gordon Selfridge, starring Jeremy Piven, Zoe Wanamaker, Amanda Abbington, Tom Goodman-Hill, Kara Tointon and Amy Beth Hayes.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.35** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Sunday Politics. **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Formula 1 – Australian Grand Prix Highlights. **2.40** Live Six Nations Rugby Union, Italy v France (Kick-off 3.00pm). **5.00** Songs of Praise. **5.30** BBC News: Regional News; Weather. **5.55** The Big Painting Challenge.
6.50 **Countryfile**. The show comes from Northern Ireland, where Matt Baker finds out about the hares that have made their home at Belfast International Airport and helps out at RSPB reserve Portmore Lough, the first in the country to offer a year-long residential volunteer programme.
7.45 **The Voice UK**. The knockout rounds come to an end and the line-up for the live shows is revealed as coaches Tom Jones and Ricky Wilson finally settle on the three acts they are each taking through to the quarter-finals. Presented by Emma Willis and Marvin Humes.
9.00 **Poldark**. Period drama set in late 18th-century Cornwall, based on the novels by Winston Graham. The closure of the local tin mine leaves hundreds out of work and desperately poor, so Ross considers reopening his family mine with a view to bringing prosperity back to the area. He takes time out to accompany his cousin Verity to a ball, where she falls in love with Captain Blamey – a man who turns out to be hiding a dark secret – and Ross causes a stir by getting intimate with the now-married Elizabeth.
10.00 BBC News: Regional News; Weather.
10.30 **Match of the Day 2**. Mark Chapman reviews the day's Premier League action, featuring Manchester United v Tottenham Hotspur, Chelsea v Southampton and Everton v Newcastle United.
11.40 **Comic Relief – The Best Bits**. A selection of clips from Friday's entertainment extravaganza from London Palladium, where celebrities including Lenny Henry and John Bishop performed to raise money for disadvantaged people in the UK and Africa. (R)
12.40 The Apprentice USA. **2.05** Weather for the Week Ahead. **2.10** BBC News.

BBC2

6.10 The Football League Show. (R) **7.30** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.00** Countryfile. (R) **9.00** Six Nations Rewind. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.30** A Taste of Britain. **12.00** A Taste of Britain. **12.30** Film: Merrill's Marauders. (1962) Adventure, starring Jeff Chandler. **2.05** Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em. (R) **2.35** Three Up, Two Down. (R) **3.05** Hi-de-Hi! (R) **3.35** Flog It! **4.35** Galapagos – Islands of Change: Natural World. (R) **5.35** Supercars vs Used Cars: The Trade Off. (R)
6.35 **Pompidou**. The penniless aristocrat realises a bowl he gave to a friend for Christmas is now worth £1million, and he and Hove hatch a plan to try to reclaim it. Jane Asher guest stars.
7.00 **Comic Relief – The Best Bits**. Highlights from Friday's extravaganza to raise money for disadvantaged people in the UK and Africa, including a Little Britain special featuring David Walliams and Stephen Hawking.
8.00 **Top Gear**. The presenters immerse themselves in the world of classic cars, Richard Hammond compares Subaru's WRX STI with VW's Golf R.
9.00 **Dragons' Den**. Duncan Bannatyne bids farewell after more than 10 years on the show, and fellow Dragons Kelly Hoppen and Piers Linney are also stepping down. Their final chance to invest in new ideas sees two young entrepreneurs pitching a bespoke suit-tailoring business, and a registered nurse trying to gain investment for her life-saving product. An eco-friendly skip on wheels causes confusion in the ranks, while edible insects give some of the panellists the creeps.
10.05 **Bluestone 42**. New series. The members of the unit find themselves trapped in hostile territory, while Bird has to step up as leader.
10.35 **The Revolution Will Be Televised**. Part two of two. The German embassy receives a visit from the London congestion charge collection team and James and Barnaby go on a fact-finding mission to the EU.
11.05 Film: **Burke & Hare**. (2010) Comedy horror, with Simon Pegg, Andy Serkis and Tom Wilkinson.
12.30 Film: **Lone Star**. (1996) **2.40** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **3.35** Holby City. (R) **4.35** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knockor Street. **6.10** Bottom Knockor Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knockor Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Animals. (R) **7.10** Sooty. (R) **7.25** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.30** Scrambled! Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled! Nerds & Monsters. (R) **7.50** Scrambled! Ultimate Spider-Man. **8.30** Scrambled! Horrid Henry. **8.50** Scrambled! Hulk and the Agents of Smash. **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **10.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.30** ITV News: Weather. **12.35** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **1.35** River Monsters. (R) **2.40** Tipping Point. (R) **3.40** Film: Licence to Kill. (1989) James Bond spy thriller, starring Timothy Dalton.
6.10 **Regional Programme**; Weather.
6.20 **ITV News**: Weather.
6.30 **The Chase: Celebrity Special**. Radio 2 presenter Ken Bruce, former England midfielder Paul Ince, EastEnders actress Laura Morse (Mo Harris) and boxer David Haye compete to win thousands of pounds for charity by taking on one of the show's resident trivia experts in a test of their general knowledge. However, they must work as a team to build their prize pot and stay one step ahead of the Chaser. (R)
7.30 **Off Their Rockers**. Mo embraces modern fashion, Tony reveals a saucy secret and Royston shares his strange inventions, as the irreverent hidden-camera show continues.
8.00 **All Star Family Fortunes**. Sunderland defender Wes Brown and actress Jill Halfpenny team up with their families in an attempt to win a jackpot of £30,000 for charity. Vernon Kay hosts.
9.00 **Mr Selfridge**. Harry is thrown when Nancy announces they should keep their relationship professional. Mr Grove continues to shun Miss Mardle, and Violette catches the eye of a French count.
10.00 **ITV News**: Weather.
10.15 **Bear Grylls: Mission Survive**. Arriving at a cave system, the contestants use their rope skills to navigate the tight spaces and waterfall descents in search of their dinner, a pig carcass that Bear has hidden. (R)
11.15 **Live Cup Rugby Union**. **12.10** The Store. **2.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.15** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.15 How I Met Your Mother. **6.40** How I Met Your Mother. **7.05** How I Met Your Mother. **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Amazing Spaces Shed of the Year. (R) **1.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.25** Film: Step Up 4: Miami Heat. (2012) Premiere. Dance drama sequel, starring Kathryn McCormick. **4.30** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.35** Channel 4 News.
6.05 **A Place in the Sun: Home or Away**. Property experts meet a couple of fitness fanatics who cannot decide between buying a property on southern Spain's Costa Tropical or opting for a bigger house in the Cotswolds.
7.00 **Four Rooms**. Dealers Gordon Watson, Celia Sawyer, Alex Proud and David Sonnenenthal battle it out over a lock of Napoleon's hair, recycled haute couture worn by burlesque star Dita Von Teese and an erotic silver chess set.
8.00 **Great Canal Journeys**. New series. Timothy West and Prunella Scales embark on a watery adventure, starting in the romantic city of Oxford, where they began their courtship many years ago. They follow the gentle contours of the Oxford Canal through the Chervell Valley, where they meet novelist Philip Pullman and are joined by their son, fellow actor Samuel West.
9.00 **Indian Summers**. Cynthia is left reeling when Eugene makes a revelation about his family's finances, while Sarah uses her knowledge of Alice's secret past to blackmail her friend.
10.00 **Britain's Racist Election**. Recalling how a political campaign took a street to the brink of racial segregation in 1964, when maverick Conservative Peter Griffiths won the West Midlands seat of Smethwick.
11.05 Film: **The Twilight Saga: Eclipse**. (2010) Bella Swan's supernatural love triangle threatens to ignite a conflict between vampires and werewolves. Romantic fantasy sequel, starring Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson.
1.15 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. **2.05** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.30** River Cottage Veg Heroes. (R) **4.55** Hugh's 3 Good Things: Best Bits. (R) **5.05** Location, Location, Location. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **6.20** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Pip Ahoy! (R) **6.45** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.55** Chloe's Closet. (R) **7.05** Only the Little White Van. **7.15** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.25** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **7.30** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.45** Mio Mao. (R) **7.50** The Little Princess. (R) **8.05** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **8.20** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **8.25** Zack and Quack. **8.35** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.50** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.00** LazyTown. **9.30** Dora and Friends. **10.00** Spangobob SquarePants. **10.35** Access. **10.45** The Dog Rescuers. (R) **11.15** The Hotel Inspector. (R) **12.15** The Hotel Inspector. (R) **1.15** Film: Lost in Space. (1998) Sci-fi adventure, starring William Hurt and Gary Oldman. **3.50** Film: Surf's Up. (2007) Animated comedy, with the voice of Jeff Bridges. **5.25** Film: A Bug's Life. (1998) Pixar animation, with the voices of Dave Foley and Kevin Spacey.
7.10 **5 News Weekend**.
7.15 Film: **Lara Croft: Tomb Raider**. (2001) The gun-toting treasure seeker is thrown into a furious battle with a mysterious secret society as she races against time to locate the missing pieces of a legendary artefact that grants the owner the ability to control time. Action adventure based on the video games, starring Angelina Jolie, Daniel Craig, Leslie Phillips, Iain Glen, Chris Barrie and Jon Voight. Edited for daytime broadcast.
9.00 Film: **Killer Elite**. (2011) A former secret agent comes out of retirement when his mentor is captured by an Arab leader. The hostage will be freed if the ex-spy kills three fellow operatives in punishment for murders they committed. However, a shadowy society of assassins intends to protect his targets and keep their past crimes a secret. Action thriller, with Jason Statham, Clive Owen and Robert De Niro.
11.20 Film: **Revolver**. (2005) A gambler is helped by two enigmatic loan sharks to exact revenge on his deranged former boss for landing him in jail. Guy Ritchie's crime drama, with Jason Statham and Ray Liotta.
1.35 SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming. **3.10** Filming My Father: In Life and Death. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **5.15** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Great Movie Mistakes **7.25** Film: Race to Witch Mountain (2009) **9.00** Live at the Apollo **10.00** I Survived a Zombie Apocalypse **11.00** Family Guy **11.45** Bluestone 42 **12.15** American Dad! **12.35** I Survived a Zombie Apocalypse **1.35** Live at the Apollo **2.05** Stop Cutting Your Girls: A Comic Relief Special
BBC Four
7.00 The Great War **7.40** London to Brighton in Four Minutes: Side By Side **7.45** Secret Knowledge: Bolsover Castle with Lucy Worsley **8.15** The Polio Story: The Vaccine That Changed the World **9.00** Nina Conti Clowning Around **10.00** Film: Untouchable (2011) **11.45** The Irish Rock Story: A Tale of Two Cities **12.45** Darcy Russell's Looking for Audrey **1.45** Narnia's Lost Poet: The Secret Lives and Loves of CS Lewis
ITV2
12.05 Take Me Out **1.10** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **1.40** Scorpion **2.30** Film: Freaky Friday (2003) **4.35** Catchphrase Mother's Day Special **8.35** Art & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway **6.55** Film: Legally Blonde 2: Red, White and Blonde (2003) **9.00** Ibiza Weekender **10.00** The Keith Lemon Sketch Show **10.30** Film: Romy and Michele's High School Reunion (1997) **12.20** Mom **1.15** Crazy Beaches **1.40** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records
ITV3
11.10 A Touch of Frost **1.20** Wycliffe **2.35** Bertie and Elizabeth **4.40** Agatha Christie's Marple **6.40** Inspector Morse **9.00** Sunday Night at the Palladium **10.00** Birds of a Feather **10.30** City Lights **11.30** Film: The Elephant Man (1980) **1.55** Perspectives: David Walliams: The Genius of Dahl **2.45** Judge Judy **3.25** ITV3 Nightscreen
ITV4
12.40 Hogan's Heroes **1.45** Pawn Stars **3.35** Storage Wars: Texas **4.05** Storage Wars **5.00** The Big Fish Off **6.05** Film: Superman IV: The Quest for Peace (1987) **8.00** Uv-Cup Rugby Union **9.00** The Chase: Celebrity Special **10.00** Cricket World Cup Highlights **11.00** Film: Runaway Train (1985)
E4
12.30 Revenge **1.30** The 100 **2.30** How I Met Your Mother **3.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.00** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** Film: Star Trek (2009) **9.00** Troy **10.00** Rude Tube **11.05** The Big Bang Theory **11.35** Tattoos After Dark **12.35** How I Met Your Mother **1.35** Rules of Engagement **2.25** The Mindy Project
Film4
11.00 Winchester '73 (1950) **1.00** New in Town (2009) **2.50** Time Bandits (1981) **5.10** Five Children and It (2004) **7.00** The Phantom (1999) **9.00** Battleship (2012) **11.35** I Think I Love My Wife (2007) **1.25** Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter – and Spring (2003)

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MONDAY

Outbreak, Channel 5, 10.50pm

An expert in infectious diseases races against time to find a cure for a rapidly fatal airborne virus which is wiping out the population of a small town, and is threatening to turn into a pandemic. However, his task is hampered by senior military men, who are bent on burning down the town and incinerating the virus with it, regardless of any casualties. Thriller, with Dustin Hoffman, Rene Russo, Morgan Freeman, Kevin Spacey and Donald Sutherland. (1995)

TUESDAY

Carry On Up the Jungle, ITV, 11.40pm

A Victorian explorer recalls how he was recruited by an aristocrat to find her missing son in the African jungle. Teaming up with a fearless hunter, he hoped to find a rare bird on his journey - but instead fell into the clutches of an all-female tribe. Comedy, starring Sid James, Frankie Howerd, Joan Sims, Kenneth Connor, Charles Hawtrey and Terry Scott. (1970)



Outbreak, Monday, Channel 5, 10.50pm

WEDNESDAY

Hollywood Homicide, BBC1, 11.15pm

Two cops are put to the test by the baffling case of a rapper murdered on stage, but they are more concerned with escaping the daily grind of catching crooks than the machinations of the music industry. While one moonlights unsuccessfully as an estate agent, the other sees this high-profile case as a chance to fulfil his dream of becoming an actor. Action comedy, starring Harrison Ford and Josh Hartnett. (2003)

THURSDAY

Escape from Polygamy, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A widowed mother joins a religious cult and goes to live in their remote compound, where her teenage daughter falls in love with the son of the group's leader. When the preacher demands that the girl marry him, the two youngsters plan to escape together. Drama, starring Haley Lu Richardson and Mary McCormack. (2013)

FRIDAY

Passchendaele, BBC2, 11.35pm

A Canadian soldier is injured in battle during the First World War, and falls for a nurse in the hospital. Declared unfit for duty due to ill health, he is reassigned to a recruitment station - but he tricks his way back to the front line to protect the brother of the woman he loves. Drama, starring Paul Gross. (2008)

PICK OF THE WEEK

Looking back at 30 years of a TV classic

No Australian soap has been as indelible as Neighbours on British culture.

From those early lunchtime screenings on BBC1, the saga of Ramsay Street folk has touched a chord with millions.

It helped make recording stars of Kylie Minogue and Jason Donovan; was a training ground for Hollywood talent such as Russell Crowe, Guy Pearce, Margot Robbie and Alan Dale, while characters such as Karl and Susan Kennedy have become household names.

In Neighbours 30th: The Stars Reunite (Wednesday, Channel 5, 10pm), Kylie, Guy, Margot, Jason and Della Goodrem reflect on their time in the show.

Stefan Dennis (Paul Robinson) and Tim Phillips (Daniel Robinson) introduce proceedings, and welcome Ian Smith and Anne Charleston (Harold and Madge Bishop), Mark Little (Joe Mangel) and Craig McLachlan (Henry Ramsay).

Paul Robinson, arguably the greatest soap villain since JR, has been a dream role for Stefan Dennis.

"He's a great part," enthuses the seasoned thespian. "People say to me, 'What's your favourite storyline that you've ever done on Neighbours?' That's one of the hardest questions for me, partly because of the amount of years I've been on the show, and because my character and my storylines are so diversified, I can never answer that question."

Stefan appeared in that first episode 30 years ago, had a dozen years off, and then returned to Ramsay Street. A decade later he's still going strong.

"I came back for two weeks as a guest star. It was, as they say, 'an offer too good to refuse.' It is funny because I'll mention (on set), 'That storyline I did a couple of years ago', and one of the cast members will say, 'That was six years ago.'"

Stefan might be happy to talk about the show which made his name, but Jason Donovan is more reluctant to reflect on the era when Scott and Charlene's wedding won the hearts of millions.

There's a whole bunch of fans that have an emotional connection with that. It's a long time ago. I certainly

understand how there's a big affection for it..."

Alan Fletcher is far happier chatting about his roles in the beloved soap. That's right, he's played someone other than ace doctor Karl Kennedy.

"It was the late Eighties and I played a character called Greg Cooper, who was a mechanic. I played him for three weeks," he recalls.

"They asked me to come back and do a year on Neighbours, but I declined because I was busy working in the theatre. Mercifully they didn't forget about me and I went back to work for them seven years later."

Alan returned to the show as Karl in 1994, but didn't have a clue that the role would dominate his life.

"I had no concept of the show lasting that long," he remarks. "Also, as a working actor, you never really like to think about how long a cult's going to go. I signed a one-year contract and I thought, 'A year on Neighbours. That'll be really cool. Then they extended it by another year. I thought, 'Great. Another year. Terrific. And then I blinked,' he laughs.



Neighbours 30th: The Stars Reunite, Wednesday, Channel 5, 10pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Britain's Benefit Tenants

Channel 4, 9pm

Due to falling numbers of council housing tenants, more and more people are renting privately, and many do so via housing benefit. Private landlords often use specialist letting agencies who are skilled in making the most from this particular marketplace, one of whom is the focus of this documentary. It follows agent Andrew Dyke, from Goldthorpe in South Yorkshire, who manages almost 1,000 clients, and who has achieved success due to his personal, hands-on approach. This week, that method even extends to him kicking in the door of one of his buildings, which has been hastily abandoned by the tenant. After gaining entry, he's surprised to find what looks like a cannabis factory. No wonder the occupant left in a hurry...

TUESDAY

Ordinary Lies

BBC1, 9pm

New series. Ensemble drama following the workers at a car showroom, revealing what happens when moments of desperation lead some of them into telling big lies - spur-of-the-moment deceptions that quickly spiral out of control. The first episode focuses on salesman

Marty, played by Jason Manford, who is on his final warning for being late - so when he sleeps through his alarm after a heavy night of drinking, he panics and comes up with a drastic excuse. His colleagues are all sympathetic - but now he has to live with the lie that his wife is dead. Max Beesley, Jo Joyner, Mackenzie Crook and Michelle Keegan co-star.

Life After Suicide

BBC1, 10.45pm

The leading cause of death in men below 50 is suicide, yet people still seem reluctant to talk about it. Birkenhead woman Angela Samata, whose partner Mark took his own life 11 years ago, meets others who have suffered a similar loss, asking why some people choose to take their own lives and whether those left behind can ever come to terms with their bereavement. Those she meets include Downton Abbey actor David Robb, talking about the death of his actress wife Briony McRoberts in 2013, and a Norfolk woman who is living with the suicides of both her husband and son.

WEDNESDAY

Stargazing Live

BBC2, 8pm

New series. Professor Brian Cox and Dara O Briain return to Jodrell Bank Observatory as they look ahead to Friday's total solar eclipse - one of biggest astronomical events of the decade. They are also joined by Apollo 11 astronaut Buzz Aldrin, while Brian makes his own attempt to land a lunar module at Nasa and Dara finds out what happened to the rocks brought back from the moon. Dr Lucie Green gives advice on how to get the most from moon-gazing and Dallas Campbell gets to grips with robots that could revolutionise space exploration.

THURSDAY

The Truth About Sugar

BBC1, 9pm

New series. In the first of four documentaries focusing on health matters, Fiona Phillips

investigates what sugar does to the body, finds out why some people have more of a sweet tooth than others and how sugar is added to many supermarket favourites believed to be purely savoury. She is also joined by four volunteers whose sugar-heavy diets could be putting their health at risk. Together they come up with ways to beat their sweet cravings and reduce their intake - but will it make a noticeable difference?

FRIDAY

Alan Carr: Chatty Man

Channel 4, 10pm

The chat show these days is less about great quotes and more about those jaw-dropping moments that go viral. While Graham Norton may be the king of the genre, with James McAvoy and Mark Ruffalo on unicycles and that Will Smith dance routine (31 million hits and rising), Alan Carr has given him a run for his money. The Tom Hiddleston dance scene from a couple of years ago is well worth tracking down if you haven't already. Now the NTA-winning host is back for a new run with The Voice coaches Rita Ora, Will.i.am, Ricky Wilson and Tom Jones; Hollywood heartthrob Antonio Banderas; EastEnders' Danny Dyer, and providing the music is X Factor runner-up Ella Henderson. She'll be performing her new single, Mirror Man.



Ordinary Lies, Tuesday, BBC1, 9pm

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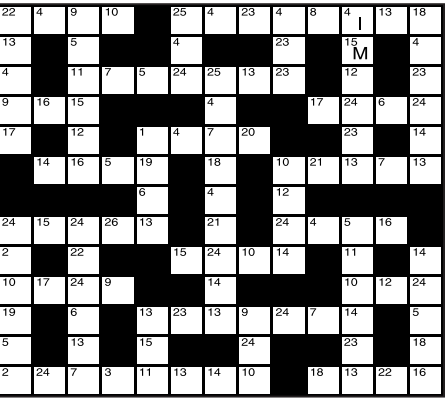
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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| T | Y | P | G | O | V | N | M | D | I | W | Z | J |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| S | K | L | Q | A | R | C | E | U | B | H | F | X |

| | |
|----|----|
| 1 | 14 |
| 2 | 15 |
| 3 | 16 |
| 4 | 17 |
| 5 | 18 |
| 6 | 19 |
| 7 | 20 |
| 8 | 21 |
| 9 | 22 |
| 10 | 23 |
| 11 | 24 |
| 12 | 25 |
| 13 | 26 |

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

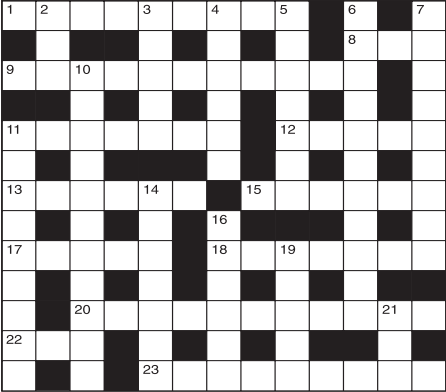
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 1. Instruct the others all round in self-control (9)
- 8. The bearing of one who succeeds, we hear (3)
- 9. This could surely be used for a spell (11)
- 11. Performer disturbed by air-test (7)
- 12. Dispatches mail for appointments (5)
- 13. It's used for painting the sails of a ship (6)
- 15. To promote, choose one before others (6)
- 17. Nautical cry coming from a street around Virginia (5)
- 18. This may show high temperature when sluices are affected (7)
- 20. Coach charges (7,4)
- 22. Sounds like the second person to provide farm stock (3)
- 23. African trumpeters? (9)

Down

- 2. Someone's age revealed inside (3)
- 3. Makes a call for some jewellery (5)
- 4. More than one reflection is written about poor game (6)
- 5. The excursionist is a dancer (7)
- 6. When they run out the eggs should be cooked! (5,2,4)
- 7. Rates revised about certain valuable items (9)
- 10. A shrub bed with a single flower (11)
- 11. Gabriel located in northern Russia (9)
- 14. The position of the rider making a pace (7)
- 16. Scoring implement needed for the clerk (6)
- 19. Part of a meal unchanged (5)
- 21. What to do with seventy-five per cent of the flesh! (3)



Quick Clues:

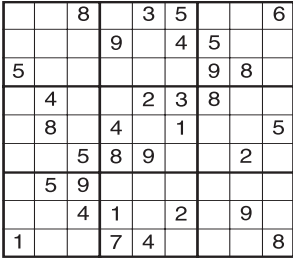
Across

- 7. Overcome (9)
- 8. Tenanted (3)
- 9. Tempest warning (5-6)
- 11. Constructor (7)
- 12. Pour fat over (5)
- 13. Folly (6)
- 15. Tranquillity (6)
- 17. Rogue (5)
- 18. Lover of country (7)
- 20. Cut off (11)
- 22. Plant (3)
- 23. Esteemed (9)

Down

- 2. Deserter (3)
- 3. Shy (5)
- 4. Bird-house (6)
- 5. Elevate (7)
- 6. Conjuror (11)
- 7. Assertion (9)
- 10. Inventiveness (11)
- 11. Liveliness (9)
- 14. Maker (7)
- 16. Athletics (6)
- 19. Topic (5)
- 21. Before (3)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 1 |
| 8 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 5 |
| 5 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 4 |
| 6 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 9 |
| 9 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 3 |
| 1 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 2 |
| 4 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 3 | 8 |
| 3 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| 7 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Uneven; 8 Polish; 10 Dilates; 11 Towel; 12 Ows; 13 Bared; 17 Utter; 18 Sty; 22 Drawl; 23 Ageless; 24 Packet; 25 Sphere. Down: 1 Outdoor; 2 Healing; 3 Testy; 4 Sorts; 5 Views; 6 Shale; 9 Estate car; 14 Atelir; 15 Steeped; 16 Leashed; 19 Adopt; 20 March; 21 Heaps. QUICK - Across: 7 Exotic; 8 Crease; 10 Replete; 11 Fling; 12 Site; 13 Peace; 17 Trite; 18 Tear; 22 Rouse; 23 Various; 24 Fello; 25 Screen. Down: 1 Repress; 2 Complete; 3 Sine; 4 Preface; 5 Rapid; 6 Verger; 9 Defective; 14 Freedom; 15 Devotee; 16 Present; 19 Gruff; 20 Bully; 21 Price.

Quiz

- 1. Who added the King's to King's Lynn?
- 2. Which popular author was born James Alfred Wight?
- 3. In which county is Stansted Airport?
- 4. Which philosopher asserted 'I think, therefore I am'?
- 5. What relation are Clement and Lucian to Sigmund Freud?
- 6. For which flower is heartsease another name?
- 7. How is diamorphine better known?
- 8. Who plays Harry Potter in the movie versions of JK Rowling's books?
- 9. For which fictional hero did Alexander Selkirk provide the model?
- 10. Which Italian team did Robbie Keane leave to join Leeds United?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Paraffin; 2 Master of the Rolls; 3 Sydney; 4 Parkinson's disease; 5 Ku Klux Klan; 6 Oleander; 7 Buddhism; 8 Greece and Albania; 9 Aldous Huxley; 10 Berlin Philharmonic. Niner: BROACHING

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

549 gives a fish,
7126 gives a second fish,
883 gives a third fish.



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MONMOUTH ROAD, SMETHWICK



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WOLVERHAMPTON ROAD, OLDBURY



DETACHED home with SOUTHERLY rear garden overlooking GOLF COURSE. 16ft lounge leading to 12ft dining area with 10ft CONSERVATORY to rear. FITTED 12ft10 kitchen with appliances. 3 bedrooms all over 12ft on 1st floor & family bathroom. BLOCKPAVED driveway to front leading to carport. Rear garden having 17ft outbuilding/games room/office. Gas central heating fitted. EPC rating: D Ref: D1582

BARCLAY ROAD, SMETHWICK



SPACIOUS & traditional end terraced home with some ORIGINAL FEATURES intact. GARAGE to side & DRIVEWAY giving off road parking. 15ft lounge to front with 12ft dining room & double doors to rear. 18ft breakfast kitchen leading to utility area & D/S WC. 3 GENEROUS size bedrooms & REFITTED bathroom with white suite. Extensive garden & patio to rear. Gas central heating fitted. EPC rating: E Ref: D1545

SHERWOOD ROAD, SMETHWICK



SPACIOUS & EXTENDED home close to Bearwood High Street & parks. Reception room to front & OPEN PLAN kitchen diner to rear leading to lean-to utility room. REFITTED family bathroom & 3 bedrooms on first floor. Low maintenance gardens. Gas central heating & majority UPVC DG. EPC rating: Ref: D1568

MONCKTON ROAD, OLDBURY



EXTENDED semi-detached home with GARAGE & driveway. 21ft L-shaped lounge & separate dining room. Fitted kitchen & utility room with D/S WC. 3 bedrooms all with FITTED bedroom furniture & family bathroom on 1st floor. Extensive gardens to rear. GCH & majority UPVC DG. EPC rating: E Ref: D1577

PERRY HILL ROAD, OLDBURY



NO CHAIN - Well presented EXTENDED semi with PARKING to front - SITUATED CLOSE TO OLDBURY QUINTON BORDER & HAGLEY ROAD. Lounge & 22ft kitchen/diner/family room, 3 bedrooms on first floor, bathroom & loft room. Enclosed garden to rear. Majority UPVC double glazing & gas central heating - EPC rating E. Ref: D1521

MILCOTE ROAD, SMETHWICK



EXTENDED terraced home with WESTERLY facing rear garden close to Bearwood High Street & Lightwoods Park. 26ft lounge diner & 14ft modern kitchen leading to downstairs bathroom. 3 bedrooms and a WC on first floor. Gas central heating & majority UPVC double glazing fitted. LOW MAINTENANCE gardens to front & rear. EPC rating: E Ref: D1567

WATERFALL LANE, CRADLEY HEATH



DETACHED cottage on CORNER PLOT with loads of potential. 2/3 bedrooms & bathroom on 1st floor. 3 reception rooms on ground floor. FITTED 9ft kitchen with built in oven & hob. Extensive lawned gardens to rear. Development potential - subject to approval. EPC rating: F Ref: D1576

PERRYHILL ROAD, OLDBURY



REFURBISHED home with blockpaved DRIVEWAY to front & 21ft GARAGE to rear. REFITTED breakfast kitchen leading to UPVC conservatory. REFITTED d/s WC & 20ft lounge diner. 2 DOUBLE bedrooms with fitted wardrobes & REFITTED shower room. UPVC DG & gas central heating. Low maintenance rear garden. EPC rating: F Ref: D1581

APSLEY ROAD, OLDBURY



NO UPWARD CHAIN - EXTENDED semi-detached home IN NEED OF UPDATING & IMPROVEMENT. 27ft Lounge/diner, kitchen, breakfast room & sun lounge. 3 bedrooms & bathroom Lawn gardens to rear. Part gas central heating (not working) & part double glazing. EPC rating: F Ref: D1541

CORNWALL AVENUE, OLDBURY



SUPERB terraced home with DRIVEWAY for up to 6 cars on the front!! REFITTED 11ft breakfast kitchen, utility area and 21ft lounge diner. 3 good sized bedrooms on 1st floor & family bathroom with WHITE SUITE. UPVC double glazing & gas central heating fitted. Lawn rear garden with patio. EPC rating: D Ref: D1523

BLUEBELL ROAD, CRADLEY HEATH



SPACIOUS home with 2 DOUBLE bedrooms. Having 2 reception rooms & REFITTED 13ft kitchen to rear. REFITTED bathroom & bedrooms on 1st floor. Lawn rear garden with open aspect. Gas central heating & UPVC DG fitted. EPC rating: E Ref: D1585

THIMBLEMILL RD, SMETHWICK



Mid terraced home CLOSE TO shops on Abbey Road & Bearwood High St. 2 reception rooms leading to 10ft kitchen. 2 DOUBLE bedrooms on 1st floor along with REFITTED bathroom with separate shower cubicle. Lawn rear garden with private aspect. GCH & UPVC DG. EPC rating: E Ref: D1579

HURST ROAD, SMETHWICK



NO UPWARD CHAIN - Terraced home with DRIVEWAY to front. 14ft lounge & 13ft kitchen diner. FULLY FITTED ground floor wet room & UPVC conservatory to rear. 3 bedrooms & bathroom on 1st floor. Gas central heating & majority UPVC double glazing fitted. EPC rating: D Ref: D1528

WARPLE ROAD, QUINTON



LARGE 2 bed semi-detached home NO UPWARD CHAIN - 21ft 5 max lounge/diner & kitchen to rear. TWO DOUBLE BEDS, Shower room & separate WC. Garden to front & well proportioned rear garden. Majority UPVC DOUBLE GLAZING & GAS CENTRAL HEATING. In need of some updating & improvement. EPC Rating D. Ref: D1584

QUEENSRIDGE COURT, OLDBURY



MODERN retirement flat with use of communal lounges & facilities. On the 2nd floor with LIFT access. 24ft open plan lounge/diner/kitchen. 2 bedrooms with shower room. UNDERFLOOR heating & UPVC double glazing fitted. Communal PARKING & gardens. Price for 35% shared ownership. EPC rating: B Ref: D1582

Hicks Hadley

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Halesowen Office Lettings & Property Management



NEW
ROWLEY REGIS, Powke Lane£895 pcm+Fees
Modern style detached house on spacious corner plot within close proximity to local shops, schools and amenities. Featuring entrance hall, lounge, dining room, breakfast kitchen, utility and guest w.c., 4 generous bedrooms, family bathroom and en suite to master bedroom to the 1st floor. The property further benefits from having an integral garage, driveway, good gardens to front, side and rear, gas central heating and double glazing. EPC: C



ROWLEY REGIS, Fairbourne Avenue£675 pcm+Fees
Perfect for a family and close to the M5. A large Mucklow Style detached home which is available now, close to local shops and bus routes. Featuring 2 double bedrooms with fitted wardrobes and 1 large single bedroom, 2 good size lounges, large kitchen, downstairs w.c., shower room, gas central heating, new windows, huge rear garden, driveway and garage. EPC: D



NEW
HALESOWEN, Beecher Street£675 pcm+Fees
A deceptively large unfurnished bungalow which has just been refurbished. Ideal for buses to Halesowen, Stourbridge and Birmingham and in the catchment area for Colley Lane Primary School. Featuring a large lounge, modern fitted kitchen, new bathroom with shower. Benefits include central heating, double glazing driveway parking. Available now. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Sunbury Road£650 pcm+Fees
Set in a quiet cul-de-sac and in the catchment area for Windsor High School. Featuring 3 bedrooms, 1 large lounge, dining area, modern kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, low maintenance rear garden, driveway parking. EPC: B/C



HALESOWEN, Downing Street£650 pcm+Fees
Most delightfully improved semi detached home in popular location, with gas radiator heating and double glazing, internal inspection essential. Comprising: Porch, hall, large lounge, modern fitted kitchen, utility, 3 good bedrooms with further loft room, super re-fitted bathroom, large pleasant gardens. EPC: E



LET
LYE, Chapel Street £595 pcm+Fees
A 3 bedroom unfurnished or part furnished to suit detached property which has been totally renovated to a very high specification and must be viewed to be fully appreciated. This lovely home has entrance hall, 2 reception rooms, breakfast kitchen with all brand new appliances, large downstairs bathroom with shower, extra separate w.c., 3 double bedrooms, gas central heating, maintenance free garden, on road parking. Available immediately. EPC: D



LET
HALESOWEN, Green Lane £575 pcm+Fees
This stunning 2 bed house will be snapped up! Convenient to the town centre & Rowley Regis train station this end terrace which can be unfurnished or part furnished to suit has 2 reception rooms, modern fitted kitchen with appliances, downstairs w.c., 2 double bedrooms & beautiful bathroom with separate shower. Private rear garden. Available end March. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Ladysmith Road£550 pcm+Fees
A mid terraced house in a sought after area for Colley Lane Primary School, bus links to Halesowen and Stourbridge. This house features 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, dining area, new downstairs shower room, 2 good size bedrooms, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden. EPC: B/C



HALESOWEN, Witton Bank £550 pcm+Fees
A well presented 2 bedroom 2nd floor apartment in a very sought after location. Having secure intercom entry, entrance hall, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, large lounge, kitchen, garage on block and communal gardens. Available immediately. EPC: C



CRADLEY HEATH, Meadow Walk£550 pcm+Fees
Modern semi detached house within a popular residential area featuring gas central heating, spacious living room, modern fitted kitchen, downstairs house bathroom, 3 good size bedrooms, large rear garden, driveway parking for 2 cars. Available immediately. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Malt Mill Lane£535 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished mid terraced house, within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre and not far from Rowley Regis train station, briefly comprising of: 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs shower room, 2 double bedrooms. Benefits include rear garden, off road parking. EPC: D



DUDLEY, Lantern Road £525 pcm+Fees
A beautifully presented mid terraced home close to local amenities. Featuring 2 bedrooms, modern fitted kitchen, spacious lounge, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden and patio area, allocated parking. EPC: D



LET
HALESOWEN, Bloomfield Street North£525 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished semi detached house within walking distance of Newfield Park Primary, Windsor High School and Halesowen College. This property features 2 reception rooms, 2 double bedrooms both with fitted wardrobes, downstairs bathroom with shower, upstairs shower room, fitted kitchen, gas central heating, double glazing. EPC: E



KIDDERMINSTER, Keats Place£485 pcm+Fees
A well presented 2 bedroom ground floor flat, having accommodation including: hall, lounge, refitted kitchen with appliances, 2 bedrooms, bathroom, gas central heating, double glazing and cul de sac location. Virgin Broadband connection is available. Own entrance to the property. EPC: C



LET
TIPTON, Ferguson Drive £480 pcm+Fees
A lovely modern 2nd floor apartment, briefly comprising of: 2 bedrooms, spacious lounge, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower, electric storage heating, double glazing, 2 allocated parking spaces, communal gardens, internal viewing recommended. EPC: C



NEW
ROWLEY REGIS, Hanover Road£450 pcm+Fees
A well presented modern ground floor apartment offering open plan living. Featuring a fitted kitchen with breakfast bar and appliances, 1 double bedroom, bathroom and shower with fitted vanity units, patio doors leading from the lounge to the communal rear gardens. Allocated parking to rear, electric heating and double glazing. 1 MONTHS DEPOSIT REQUIRED. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Belgrave Road£450 pcm+Fees
A large ground floor modern apartment within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre and local buses. Featuring a spacious lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, 1 double bedroom, newly fitted bathroom suite with shower. Gas central heating, small rear garden with private entrance. Available Now. EPC: B/C



LET
HALESOWEN, Brett Young Close£450 pcm+Fees
Situated within a few minutes walk of Halesowen Town Centre and local bus station for buses into Birmingham City Centre. This well presented 1st floor apartment, comprising of 1 double bedroom with built in wardrobes, fitted kitchen with integrated appliances, house bathroom with shower, cosy lounge, double glazing, gas central heating and 1 allocated parking space. EPC: B



ROWLEY REGIS, The Link £425 pcm+Fees
Located close to the M5 J2 is this quiet and spacious unfurnished ground floor apartment, briefly comprising of electric storage heating, open plan living room/fitted kitchen with white goods, 1 double bedroom with built in wardrobe, house bathroom with shower, parking space to rear. EPC: C



LET
CRADLEY HEATH, Great Western Drive£385 pcm+Fees
A very well presented 1st floor apartment in a well sought after location. Ideal for Old Hill Train Station, local shops and bus links. The apartment features a great size lounge with a 2 seater sofa, coffee table and bookcase, modern kitchen, bathroom with shower, allocated parking for 1 car, communal gardens to the rear. EPC: B/C



LET
LYE, High Street £375 pcm+Fees
A very well presented 1st floor apartment in the centre of Lye. This spacious 2nd floor apartment features a lovely lounge, 1 double bedroom, bathroom, modern and contemporary kitchen/ diner, electric heating, double glazing, on road parking. Available now. EPC: E

PROPERTY

Extended town house for offers around £119,950

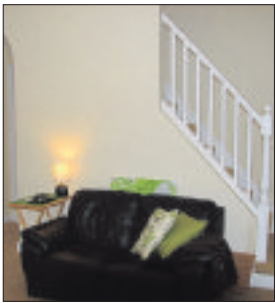


THIS refurbished two-bed town house in Brook Street, Gornal, has been extended.

It is for sale through Bakers Property at £119,950.

With double glazing and central heating and a courtyard-style rear garden and parking, it has a lounge with doors to the courtyard garden and an inglenook open chimney, under-stairs storage and stairs off, a dining room with gas fire, a kitchen with an integrated hob, oven and overhead extractor hood, a utility, two bedrooms and a bathroom.

For details call 01384 252527 or visit the www.bakersproperty.co.uk website.



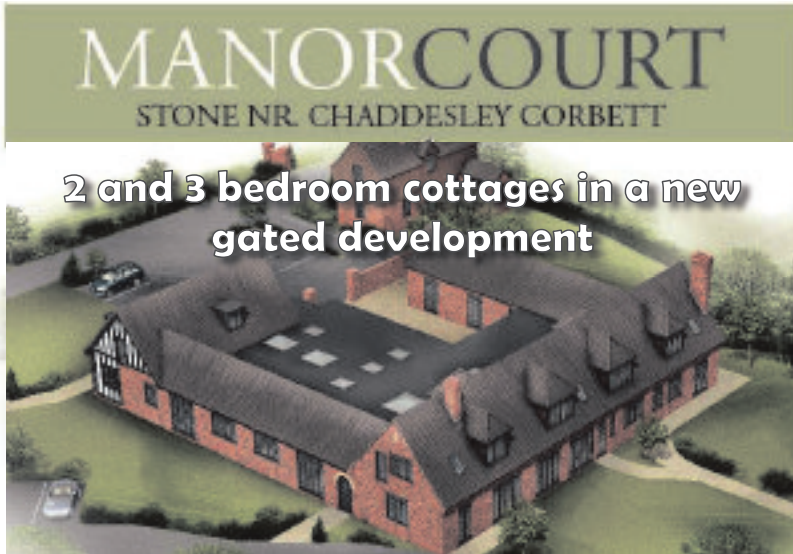
Four-bedroom detached is in a popular area



THIS extended four-bedroom detached house in Dog Kennel Lane, Oldbury, has a good sized garden and is in a popular area.

It is for sale through Tom Giles & Co at £339,950. It has a reception hall with a staircase off, a WC, sitting room with a bay window, a lounge with a sliding door to conservatory, extended kitchen/dining room with modern units, a five ring gas hob with cooker hood above, an integrated dishwasher, double oven, central island and breakfast bar and dining area, a conservatory, utility/verandah. Bedroom one has en suite wardrobes, three further bedrooms feature fitted furniture, there is a bathroom with tiled flooring and a heated towel rail. There is a garage and rear garden. Contact Tom Giles & Co on 0121 5526171 or visit www.tomgilesandco.co.uk





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**Show Cottage Grand Opening
Saturday March 14th 10am - 2pm**



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**LAX LANE, BEWDLEY
£185,000**

Charming Grade II listed courtyard cottage in super location only 50 yards from the riverside. Spacious Breakfast Kitchen with Brick Feature Fireplace, First Floor Dual Aspect Lounge, Double Bedroom, Bathroom with White Suite, Occasional Second Bedroom in Attic Space, Garage in Courtyard. EPC: D.



**WOLVERLEY HOUSE, WOLVERLEY
£220,000**

Delightful ground floor apartment with own private entrance door forming part of a splendid Grade II● listed Manor House enjoying a delightful location. Superb 18ft x 15ft Lounge, Split-level Dining Area, Open Plan Kitchen, Master Bedroom with En-suite Shower Room, Second Double Bedroom, Bathroom, Garage



**THE GABLES, HARTLEBURY
£569,950**

Wonderfully spacious historic Grade II Listed house in the sought after village of Hartlebury with more than 4,000 sq ft over three floors. Splendid Drawing Room 24' x 15', Dining Room, Study, Fabulous Open Plan Kitchen / Family Room, Six Bedrooms, Two Bathrooms, Basement Sauna, Double Garage. EPC: D.



**SHUT MILL BARN, ROMSLEY, NEAR HALESOWEN
£479,950**

Beautifully situated barn conversion in idyllic rural surroundings ideally placed for commuters (M5 J4 3 miles). Splendid Dining Hall with Open Gallery Landing, Lounge with Inglenook Fireplace, Study/Bedroom 4, Excellent 15ft x 13ft Breakfast Kitchen, Utility Room, Guest Cloakroom, Three Principal Bedrooms, Dressing Room & Shower Room to Master, Family Bathroom, Generous Parking & Double Garage.



**WARESLEY LODGE, HARTLEBURY
£369,950**

Attractive individual 18th Century detached house, with basement flat providing letting potential. Sitting Room with Feature Fireplace, Spacious Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen with Appliances, Ground Floor Shower Room, Three Principal Double Bedrooms, Bathroom & En-suite Shower Room, Detached Garage & Parking, Desirable Position on Village Outskirts.



**THE OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL, HARTLEBURY
£685,000**

Set within a Conservation Area and dating back to the 18th Century, with a wealth of period features. Generous driveway, gardens front and rear, detached double Garage with W.C., Workshop and Loft Room over with Shower Room. EPC: E



**7 THURSTON COURT, BEWDLEY
£220,000**

A delightful and spacious three storey town house enjoying a courtyard location off Severn Side South. Reception Hall, Spacious Lounge, 20'9" Dining Kitchen with Integrated Appliances, Utility Room, Generous First Floor Landing leading to Two Bedrooms and House Bathroom, Second Floor to Principal Bedroom with Fitted Wardrobes and En-suite Shower Room, 2 Allocated Parking Spaces, No Upwards Chain.



**THE WILLOWS, STOURPORT ON SEVERN
£255,000**

Fabulous riverside gardens at head of private cul-de-sac with this unique modern detached property. Lounge with Feature Fireplace, Wide Open Arch to Dining Room, Kitchen with Integral Hob, Oven & Hood, Study, Utility Room & W.C., Three First Floor Bedrooms, En-suite Dressing Room to Master, Detached Garage 18ft x 14ft, Fishing Rights on River Stour. EPC: C.



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Bewdley 01299 400555

Stourport 01299 825522

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Genuinely helpful.



OLDBURY | £190,000

- Detached Bungalow EPC Rating D
- Lounge Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms Shower Room W/c
- Garage Drive Front and Rear Gardens

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OLDBURY | £170,000

- Traditional Semi Detached EPC Rating D
- Lounge Open Plan Kitchen-Diner
- Three Bedrooms and Bathroom W/c
- Gardens To The Front and Rear

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OLDBURY | £170,000

- Semi Detached Property Awaiting EPC
- Open Plan Lounge Diner Kitchen Utility
- Three Bedrooms Bathroom Separate W/c
- Integral Garage Driveway Rear Garden

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0121 421 7766



QUINTON | £170,000

- Period Terrace Property EPC Rating E
- Good Size Lounge Kitchen Dining Room
- Four Bedrooms and Bathroom W/c
- Must View To Appreciate Property

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BARTLEY GREEN | £150,000

- Mid Terrace Property EPC Rating B
- Thro Lounge Conservatory Kitchen W/c
- Three Bedrooms Bathroom W/c
- Must View To Appreciate Property

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OLDBURY | £149,950

- Modern Detached EPC Rating C
- Lounge Dining Room Kitchen
- Three Bedrooms Bathroom W/c
- Detached Garage Driveway Rear Garden

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OLDBURY | £135,000

- Semi Detached Property EPC Rating E
- Lounge Open Plan Kitchen-Diner
- D'stairs Bathroom W/c Three Bedrooms
- Drive To Front Garden To The Rear

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OLDBURY | £130,000

- Large End Terrace EPC Rating D
- Open Lounge/Diner Fitted Kitchen W/c
- Three Bedrooms Shower Room W/c
- Driveway Side Storage Area Rear Garden

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OLDBURY | £130,000

- Semi Detached Property EPC Rating D
- Lounge Conservatory Kitchen Utility Wc
- Three Bedrooms Bathroom Wc
- Driveway To Front Garden To The Rear

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OLDBURY | £120,000

- Semi Detached Property EPC Rating E
- Through Lounge Dining Room
- Three Bedrooms Bathroom W/c
- Benefiting From No Upward Chain

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WOODGATE VALLEY |

- Mid Terrace Property EPC Rating E
- Lounge Kitchen-Dining Room
- Three Bedrooms Bathroom W/c
- Benefiting From No Upward Chain

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OLDBURY | £69,950

- Grd Floor Apartment EPC Rating C
- Lounge Kitchen 2 Bedrooms Bathroom
- Retirement Property Must Be Over 55's
- Benefits From Having No Upward Chain

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BARTLEY GREEN | £65,000

- First Floor Apartment EPC Rating C
- Lounge Kitchen
- Double Bedroom Bathroom W/c
- No Upward Chain

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OLDBURY | £550

- Mid Terrace Property EPC Rating D
- Lounge Re-furnished Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms Bathroom
- Viewing Recommended

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ROWLEY REGIS | £475

- Second Floor Apartment EPC Rating D
- Lounge Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms Bathroom W/C
- Allocated Parking Area

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ROWLEY REGIS | £425

- Ground Floor Apartment EPC Rating C
- Open Plan Lounge/Diner and Kitchen
- Double Bedroom Bathroom W/c
- Allocated Parking Immediate Availability

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Celerio for no-nonsense

Commercial feature

Suzuki has had a tough time in the past few years and when pressed, its UK importers tend to hold up their hands and put the blame squarely on global exchange rates.

Yes, those same exchange rates that saw Daihatsu pull out of the UK and Subaru discover that the relative strength of the yen versus the pound made its cars as expensive as some BMWs and Audis. We have every sympathy for Suzuki.

Subaru were pretty much hosed for a while because all of its manufacturing base was in Japan, so it bore the full brunt of the fiscal fluctuations. Suzuki has boxed a bit cleverer and has leveraged its longstand-



ing association with Maruti in India to bring us the Celerio citycar. Can it compete with some very sophisticated rivals in the UK? More to the point, does it even need to?

The one-litre three-cylinder petrol engine develops a total of 66bhp at 6,000rpm and 89Nm of torque at 3,500rpm, so you're going to need to give the throttle pedal a bit of treatment to get anywhere.

There's plenty of space in the cabin for five occupants. The boot is vast for a city car, with a capacity of 254-litres.

The Celerio is tasked with pensioning off both the Splash and the Alto in the Suzuki range, which is quite a weight of responsibility to land on its narrow shoulders. Built in Thailand, it's clearly targeting the value end of the city car market.

Prices start at around £8,000 for the SZ3 version, rising to around £9,000 for the plusher SZ4.

Standard specification highlights for the Celerio SZ3 includes six airbags (Driver, passenger, side and curtain), ESP stability control, air conditioning, alloy wheels, DAB Radio, CD Tuner, USB, Bluetooth connectivity and remote central locking. The even higher equipped SZ4 model adds polished alloy wheels, rear electric windows, front fog lamps, body coloured door mirrors and chrome front grille. The Celerio is offered in six colours, of which five are optional metallic finish and one a standard solid colour.

Also available is Suzuki's Auto Gear Shift (AGS) transmission featuring an intelligent shift control actuator positioned at the top of the gearbox that operates the gearshift and clutch automatically.

The one-litre triple engine makes some very respectable figures, eking 65.7 miles from a gallon of unleaded and emitting just 99g/km of carbon dioxide. Go for the AGS-equipped model and things get even



Suzuki reckon on emissions of just 84g/km, some of the lowest for such a conventional petrol-engined car

better. Suzuki reckon on emissions of just 84g/km, which is one of the very lowest figures for a conventional petrol-engined car. If you were expecting something cheap and primitive when you saw that Maruti association, think again.

The Suzuki Celerio is always going to be overshadowed by state of the art city slickers like the Volkswagen Up or the Renault Twingo, but it was never really designed to compete with the more high-end offerings of the city car sector.

It's easy to overlook the fact that after the Hyundai i10 and the Volkswagen Up, the biggest selling citycar in the UK in 2014 was the Suzuki Alto. The Celerio looks set to do even better than the Alto, with its super-low emissions and clever transmission.

If you want a car that is utterly no-nonsense, easy to use and which we'd bet will prove to be extremely reliable, the Celerio demonstrates that these qualities needn't cost you the earth.

The fact that it's well-equipped and is incredibly cheap to run is just the icing on the cake. It might not seem an obvious hit on first acquaintance, but give this one time. We think it could be the sleeper hit of the year.

ALL-NEW SUZUKI CELERIO. SPEC-TACULAR.

Comfortably spacious, the compact Celerio has plenty inside to make you smile. For starters, there's air-con and Bluetooth. Plus it's easy to drive. And when you consider it's now available from £149.09 per month* on Suzuki Personal Contact Purchase, what's not to like?

Contact Halesowen Motor House today.

Representative example Celerio SZ4 5dr

| 41 monthly payments of | Customer Deposit | Cash Price | Duration of Agreement | Final Payment | Total Amount of Credit | Total Amount Payable | Purchase Fee (included) | Credit Facility Fee (Included) | Interest Rate (Fixed) | Representative APR |
|------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| £149.09 | £1,400.00 | £8,999 | 43 months | £2,989.00 | £7,599.00 | £10,650.78 | £0.00 | £0.00 | 8.5% | 8.9% |

Request a Test Drive today: suzuki.co.uk/halesowenmotorhouse
Halesowen Motor House
 Dudley Road Halesowen West Midlands B63 3NH **0121 503 0001**

Official Fuel Consumption Figures for the Suzuki Celerio range mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km): Urban 55.3-68.9 (5.3-4.1), Extra Urban 76.3-83.0 (3.7-3.4), Combined 65.7-78.4 (4.3-3.6), CO₂ emissions 99-84 g/km.

The above fuel consumption figures are based on an EU test for comparative purposes only and may not reflect real driving results. *This offer is available from 1st January 2015 to 31st March 2015 from participating Authorised Suzuki Dealers only. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer unless otherwise stated. This offer relates to Suzuki Personal Contract Purchase (PCP Finance Deal). All prices are correct at the time of going to print. Credit is available to persons aged 18 years or over, subject to status. Contract based on 6,000 miles per annum. For full details contact your local Suzuki Dealer. Suzuki Finance reserves the right to withdraw or amend this offer without notice or prior warning. This offer is available to customers within the UK (excludes Channel Islands & Isle of Man). Suzuki Financial Services Limited, part of Lloyds Banking Group: St William House, Tresillian Terrace, Cardiff, CF10 5BH. We may receive commission or other benefits for introducing you to Suzuki Financial Services. Model shown: Celerio SZ4 (metallic paint available at £415). For full details contact your local participating Suzuki Dealer. All prices and specifications correct at time of going to print.



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| 59 C3 Picasso 1.6 HDI VTR+ Silver Only 8000 Miles | £7,995 |
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| 11 C4 G Picas 1.6 HDI VTR+ EGS Red Only 10000 Miles | £10,495 |
| 63 C4 Picasso 1.6 HDI VTR+ Silver Only 10000 Miles | £12,995 |
| 61 Micra 1.2 Acenta Silver Only 10000 Miles | £6,295 |
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Citroen

| | |
|---|---------|
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| 61 C4 G Picasso 1.6 HDI VTR+ EGS Silver 21k | £10,495 |
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| 12 Focus 1.6 Zetec Blue 18k | £9,495 |
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| 60 Fiesta 1.25 Zetec 5dr Red 22k | £7,495 |
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| 61 Juke 1.6 Acenta Red 19k | £9,795 |
| 61 Qashqai 1.5 DCI Acenta Red 24k | £10,995 |

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| 10 Partner 1.4 Wh/Chair Access Silver 14k | £5,995 |
| 61 207 1.4 HDI Active 3dr Silver 20k | £6,795 |
| 61 308 1.6 HDI Access Vapour Grey 22k | £8,995 |
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| 60 Kangoo 1.6 Wheel/Chair Access Auto Red 15k | £8,995 |
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| 57 Scenic 1.6 Dynamique Black 39k | £3,495 |

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| | |
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| 12 Corsa 1.4 SE Auto Silver 13k | £7,995 |
| 13 Meriva 1.7 CDTI Exclusiv Brown 18k | £8,495 |
| 11 Meriva 1.7 CDTI Exc Auto Blue 25k | £6,295 |
| 05 Corsa 1.2 Life Silver 31k | £2,995 |
| 59 Astra 1.6 Design Grey 32k | £5,995 |
| 05 Astra 1.4 Club Silver 73k | £3,795 |
| 08 Astra 1.6 Twin Top Red | £3,695 |

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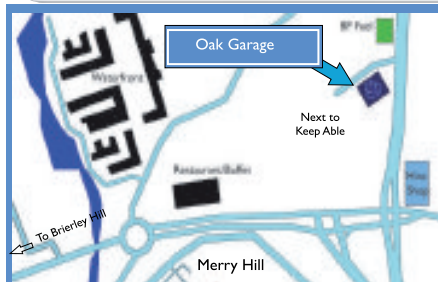
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Welcome to Oak Garage at Cornbow Halesowen and quality used vehicles

Commercial feature

When it comes to finding value and high quality used vehicles Oak Garage at Sterling Park, Merry Hill takes a lot of beating. What's more, the team can provide all this, plus a customer service experience that will entice you back again when it's time to replace your car.

Established in 1971 Oak Garage has gained an enviable reputation for delivering quality and value. As an official Motability Partner, the dealership offers ex-Motability cars sourced straight from the organisation itself.

These vehicles will have been properly maintained to manufacturer standard and regularly valeted throughout their lifetime.

Any minor paint or body damage will have been removed and all will have main dealer stamps in the service book. A considerable number may also still be covered under the manufacturer's warranty and most will carry extremely low mileages being no more than three years old.

Showcases

Whilst Oak Garage in Sterling Park, next to Merry Hill, displays its vehicles within a spacious new showroom, this friendly independent specialist dealership often showcases its vehicles at various popular retail centres in Halesowen, Dudley and across the surrounding area.

Final preparations are now underway to display vehicles on a large stand within the Cornbow Centre in Halesowen so that shoppers can view Oak Garage's 'star cars' when visiting the town's largest retail complex.

From today and for the next six months, Oak Garage will be presenting one of its cars on the stand situated between Druckers Vienna Patisserie and Asda at the bottom of the escalator. These vehicles will be regularly changed to give shoppers an ideal opportunity to see the sheer breadth and variety of cars available at the dealership.

For much of the time the stand will be manned. A computer is being set up so that stand visitors can view all 50 cars available at the Merry Hill dealership through a 'virtual showroom.'

Requirements

What's more, because Oak Garage is one of the larger ex-Motability fleet car suppliers, the sales team have access to Motability's entire ex-fleet database where over 1,000 cars can be seen online, any one of which can be quickly sourced and supplied, taking into account all your personal requirements.

Oak Garage's unique 'All Inclusive Package' also includes an HPI Vehicle History check and pre-delivery valet and access to low rate finance facilities from Close Motor Finance and MotoNovo, two of the best names in the business.

Be sure to visit Oak Garage's stand at The Cornbow Centre, Halesowen from this Thursday as with more than 1,000 superb ex-Motability vehicles available at any one time, they are bound to be able to find a car that exactly matches your needs and lifestyle at a price you can afford.

To find out more call 01384 75097 or visit their excellent website by logging onto www.oakgarage.co.uk

You can also visit Oak Garage's new showroom at Units 1-2 Sterling Park, Merry Hill, DY5 1TB.

Insignia – back to the front?

By David Banner

Welcome to Britain's best selling traditional family car. Yes, you heard that right Vauxhall's Insignia. Launched in 2008 as a more stylish replacement for the uninspiring Vectra, this model was instantly well received, carrying off the coveted 2009 Car of the Year title and racking up impressive sales at the same time as other mainstream brands were struggling.

This improved model has had a thorough chassis update tested on proper bumpy British roads, with a redesigned rear suspension system to improve ride comfort and a steering calibration refreshment that's brought a more direct feel through the corners.

And both of those issues can be further improved if you tick the extra-cost box for the FlexRide adaptive damping system.

You can't fault the effort that's gone into all of this – over 60 percent of the chassis componentry is new – but it's not enough to make this into a car you'd really describe as 'rewarding'.

What it does do is perfect what was there in the first place. For most of the people, most of the time, this, dynamically, is all the car they will ever need, quietly and effectively getting on with the job of getting you from A to B.

Refinement

The 'quietly' bit's important. Almost all Insignia buyers want a diesel and though the original version of Vauxhall's 2.0 CDTi unit had many merits, refinement wasn't one of them. In fact, it was one of the noisiest, rattliest diesels in its class.

But isn't now. Though at the launch of this revised version, an old 2.0 CDTi 130 unit was still being offered as a range price leader, most sales emphasis these days is put on the two entry-level 2.0 CDTi ecoFLEX units, offering either 120 or 140PS.

There's also a less frugal 163PS version and a potent 195PS 2.0 CDTi Biturbo.

In the petrol range, there's also a cheap old-tech engine choice – the 140PS 1.8i unit – but again, more emphasis is being put on the modern turbo powerplant offerings, the 140PS 1.4T, the 170PS 1.6 SIDI and the 250PS 2.0 SIDI. At the top of the range, a 325PS 2.0 V6 continues in the VXR SuperSports model.

This VXR has 4WD but the only other model in the range that gets it is the Country Tourer estate version which, with its raised ride height, aims to offer an SUV alternative.

Outside, there are detail improvements front and rear that aim to bring a wider and lower look to the hatch, saloon and Sports Tourer estate bodystyles that, as before, make up the range. That's certainly the feel you get from the front end with its redesigned high-gloss chrome grille and thinner logo bar cradling a prominent Griffin badge and including winglets that link with the sleeker gloss black-trimmed headlights.

Up-to-date

And inside? Well it feels a great deal more up to date, with many of the previously scattered and confusing little buttons tidied up onto a (sadly optional) central 8-inch colour touchscreen that deals with everything from navigation to audio selections, Bluetooth phone functions to a series of Vauxhall-sourced apps.

There's even a slightly cheap-feeling touchpad behind the gearlever that accepts one, two or three finger gestures for the various operating functions – or you can press a button on the steering wheel and activate the whole thing by voice control.

More hi-tech can be viewed through the redesigned three-spoke leather-trimmed steering wheel where you'll find an instrument cluster with another 8-inch high resolution display.

This one, also optional and framed by conventional analogue gauges either side, is primarily there to show a virtual speedometer but can also be configured to display all sorts of information such as smartphone or audio use – or even navigation.

Out back, the hatch most choose offers a 530-litre boot – with 540-litres on offer in the Sports Tourer estate.

In theory, Insignia pricing covers a very wide span – anywhere between £17,000 and £33,000.

In practice, almost all Insignia sales are concentrated in the £17,000 to £22,000 bracket, with most of those going to business buyers who usually want one of the 2.0-litre CDTi diesel variants. Paying much more than that for this car takes it into the BMW 3 Series dominated compact executive saloon bracket where mainstream makers usually struggle.

Talking of saloons, there's a four-door Insignia saloon bodystyle as a no-cost option to the more familiar five-door hatch, but it comes with a much smaller range of trim and engine choices.



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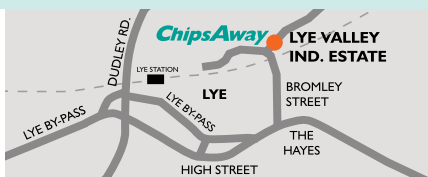
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Gearing up for new venture

For one fast fit network in the UK, the future is looking particularly bright after new locations and significant investment was announced for 2015, starting with an impressive new facelift for a Halesowen centre.

First Stop has revealed plans to build on its network and has now relaunched its new-look garage in Overend Road, Halesowen, which has benefited from substantial investment to boast improved branding and equipment, in a sign of things to come.

At present, First Stop is comprised of 52 locations around the UK and the chain is planning on recruiting more

outlets across the UK. They have also improved branding at three other members at Hordean Tyres, Ashton Tyres & Exhausts and Thorntons Tyres.

First Stop's retail business development manager Stuart Eagland said the plan was to keep on developing the network and giving motorists more compelling reasons to visit one of its centres for repairs and maintenance.

He said: "We are embarking on an exciting new chapter for First Stop, with better branding, equipment and overall support promised from many of our business partners."

Stuart refers to the First Stop business model as a 'soft franchise' proposition and, being the retail arm of Bridgestone, he believes that the

network is in a strong position to succeed. The benefit of working with Bridgestone is that we work directly with the world's largest tyre manufacturer, before providing some outstanding premium products to motorists.

"Our Halesowen centre is testament to the new direction we are working towards. It offers the full range of services including tyres, MOTs, servicing, exhausts, batteries and anything else besides.

"Proving this 'one-stop-shop' solution is something we are seeking to replicate and we are actively looking to develop the network around the UK from here on."

For more information about First Stop and its network of centres, visit www.firststop.co.uk

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VAUXHALL

Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). Vauxhall range (excl. Ampera): Urban: 12.7 (22.3) - 76.3 (3.7), Extra-urban: 23.9 (11.8) - 94.2 (3.0), Combined: 18.0 (15.7) - 88.3 (3.2). CO₂ emissions: 373 - 85g/km. #

Participating Retailers only. Model featured Astra Excite 1.4 5dr in Power Red from £12,595 on the road and Astra Limited Edition 1.6 5dr in Power Red from £14,495 on the road. Offer available on orders or registrations from 4 March to 1 July 2015, subject to availability. Offer available to private individuals and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only, excluding B2B). All other sales categories are excluded; cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Prices shown are correct at the time of publication. UK-supplied vehicles only. *Applicants must hold a full, valid driving licence and be 18 years or over to qualify for a test drive. #Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. Correct at time of going to press.

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4 Pets & Animals

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UNITS TO LET
15

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6 Property

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SMART ROOMS in shared house. Netherton. from £85 pw inc bills. No DSS. Small deposit 07940 116130

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Due to increased pupil numbers we are seeking to appoint committed, experienced and enthusiastic staff to join our successful school team. We have the following vacancies:

Design & Technology Technician (including Food)
Date: To commence ASAP.
Salary: Band C (Spine point 14-19, pro-rata salary).
Contract: Term time only + 5 INSET days + 5 additional days, permanent.
37 Hours Per week.

Closing Date: 9.00am on Monday 23 March 2015
The successful candidates will have experience of working in a Design and Technology-rich environment and must have a proven background of successfully working with children. You must be able to form good working relationships with students, be an excellent role model and have excellent skills in responding to and resolving challenging behaviours.

The successful candidate will have excellent communication and ICT skills and a passion and desire to work with pupils from a variety of backgrounds. They must be dynamic individuals who are able to respond to the changing demands of daily school life.
Interviews will be held on Tuesday 14th April 2015.

Mid-Day Supervisor Assistant
Salary: Band B (SCP 9-13, pro-rata salary).
Contract: Term time only + 5 INSET days 9hrs 10mins per week.
Closing Date: 9.00am on Monday 30 March 2015

The successful candidates will assist and support pupils during their lunch breaks, supervise playground activities and have an option to support pupils in the classroom.
You must have a proven background of successfully working with children.

Our School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable groups including children, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS clearance and Staff Disqualification Declaration is required for these roles. For more information about the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy go to the Policy Section of our website at <http://www.thewestminsterschool.co.uk/policies>

This is an exciting opportunity to join the staff team at The Westminster School.
For more details and an application form please visit <http://www.thewestminsterschool.co.uk/vacancies>

Applications should be sent to Lauren Richardson, Transactional HR Consultant, SIPS Education Ltd, 2nd floor, Guardian House, Cronehills Linkway, West Bromwich, West Midlands, B70 8GS or lauren.richardson@sandwellpools.org.uk

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5dr, hatchback, MoT August 2015,
company car, for sale
£1,200ono. 07778 145597.



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sound system. Full MoT and
service history. Superb in and
out. Any test or trial. Call for
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plate, 2001, MoT Jun, 41,000
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MoT, good condition £2,000 ono.

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full MoT, 2 owners, very good con-
dition £7,500. 01902 736771.

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£3,000 o.n.o.
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or

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MoT, metallic paint, alloys,
good tyres, CD, HPI clear, 1
Doctor 1 lady owner from new.

£2,100 ono.

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SPORT
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65,000 miles, green, new clutch
fitted, MoT Aug 2015.

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01902 409769, 07742 019731

PEUGEOT 3008 Allure, 2011, red,
1.6 diesel, auto, full glass roof,
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PEUGEOT 307CC COUPE
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top convertible, 4,800 miles
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44,400 miles, black/silver, electric
windows, fsh, MoT, auto, petrol,
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alloy wheels, MoT Aug 2015,
80,000 miles, good condition, £575.
07779 890165.

HYUNDAI COUPE T Reg, auto-
matic, low mileage, 3 owners, 6
months MoT, £500 01902 659047.

JAGUAR X TYPE 2.5L
SPORT
2001, 4x4, 120,000 miles,
silver, MoT, electric windows,
electric mirrors, air con, alarm,
central locking, pas, alloys, CD,
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MERCEDES 180 SPORT, S Reg.
Excellent condition. First to see will
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Telephone 07925 304167.

NISSAN MICRA S 2005, 1200cc,
54,000 miles, silver, 3 door, MoT till
October, £1,500. 07751 489369.

PEUGEOT 206 2.0 Turbo Diesel
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100,000k, MoT'd, excellent con-
dition, 5995. 07851 213316.

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condition, fsh, MoT, £1,500 ono.
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reg, 3dr, low miles, long MoT, CD,
EW, EW, £1,395. 07779 455916.

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silver, 3 months MoT, 85,000 miles.
£1,000 ono.
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TOYOTA YARIS 1.3 2005, 84k, lady
owner, MoT Oct 2015, alloys, fsh,
excellent condition, fsh £1,995 ono.
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VAUXHALL CORSA 1.0, 3dr, hatch,
2002, MoT June, blue, petrol, 128k,
4 former keepers, excellent runner,
£800 ono. 07773 894665.

VOLVO S40 1.8S, 03, MoT, good
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9
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10
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Wolves get a point from battle on home turf

Wolves 2 Watford 2
KENNY Jackett's side, perhaps, deserved more than a point from this high-tempo encounter for the way they dominated much of the game.

But with 10 games to go, this was probably one they needed to win to start eating into that four-point gap to the play-off places.

Jackett deployed the recently under-used James Henry in the No.10 role.

But Henry has the intelligence, subtlety of touch and vision to justify his manager's faith in him and he responded with a man of the match performance.

Benik Afobe gave the home side the perfect start in the 14th minute with his seventh goal in 11 games for his new club, taking his tally to 26 for the season which made him the leading marksman in all four divisions.

Even at 62m, Afobe looks a steal. It's difficult to recall a Wolves striker with the combination of such control, quick feet, pace and movement.

And he showed all those qualities as he effortlessly brought down Kevin McDonald's pass before taking a touch and slotting it past keeper Heurelho Gomes.

Wolves retained the initiative but failed to penetrate. And they found themselves all square again.

Former Walsall striker Troy Deeney's long pass from the left was gobbled up by Matej Vydra and the ex-Albion loanee did the rest.

Jack Price's first senior goal five minutes after the restart gave the home side some reward.

However, Deeney poked home the equaliser.

Fresh twist over Blues ownership

BIRMINGHAM CITY'S complex ownership situation has taken another twist after seven directors resigned from its parent company.

A statement to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange confirmed the changes, which has seen the seven directors resign and former chairman Peter Pannu removed.

The move effectively sees the receivers, Ernst and Young, in charge, with employees Stephen Lui appointed chairman of the board and David Yen Ching Wai as chief executive.

Pannu has been removed from the BIHL board along with Chan Shun Wah.

Two others, Cheung Kwai Nang and Carson Wong Ka Chun, have also been suspended. Panos Pavlakis has resigned but remains a director at St Andrew's.

This is my dream job, says Clegg

MAX Clegg says he has landed the dream job as Cradley skipper for the new season.

Clegg will lead the Heathens into action at Birmingham next Wednesday, March 18, in the first leg of the Travel Plus Challenge.

Clegg, who will be riding for the Heathens for the third consecutive season in 2015, says he can't wait to get going and is predicting another 'amazing year' for the side.

"It's been my dream ever since I started with Cradley to become their number one and to be captain as well as a pleasure knowing that I can be such a big part of the club," he said.

"If I could guide the club to a hat-trick of league

titles in my first year as number one and captain, that would be such a big thing and such an amazing achievement – it would be heaven for me.

"All of the teams have got really strong heat-leaders but I think the reserves and the riders in the lower part of the team are going to be key.

"I think Mike (Neale) will have a good year and there's a lots of expectations from Ellis (Perks) – they will give it their best but if they do what we know they can do, then I don't think anything's going to stop Cradley again this year."

The young Yorkshireman, who turns 18 next month, feels he has been handed the 'ultimate reward' following his excellent run of form from the

second half of the 2014 campaign. He is also hoping that he can use his own previous memories to make him the perfect skipper.

Clegg said: "I remember when I started at reserve, Lewis (Blackbird) and Ash (Morris) were brilliant with me and then Starkey (Paul Starke) was excellent last year.

"I think if I can help the boys this year like they all helped me then we're in for a good season."

"It will be slightly tougher to be Cradley captain this year because we're at a different track which is new to all of us really.

"I think it will be a disadvantage for us to start with – but only for the first few meetings."

It's double delight for Old Hales side

**OHHC 1sts 4 Stone 3
OHHC 1sts 9 Chesterfield 1**
OLD Halesonians Men's 1st XI completed a perfect 6-pointer weekend, as they beat opposition at opposite ends of the table.

The two wins put Hales mathematically clear of the bottom three with just three games to go.

On Saturday, Hales hosted Stone who sit second in the Midlands 1 division.

It was the visitors who expectedly opened the scoring, but the home side responded almost immediately, and drew the scores level within a few minutes when Paul Woodall converted from a penalty corner.

The hosts found themselves in-front soon after when Graham Knight found himself with time at the top of the circle.

Knight composed himself and slotted the ball home into the bottom corner.

Before the half-time break however, the visitors responded, and the scores were level at 2-2 at the half-way point.

Secured

The second half continued as the first left off, with chances for both sides. Woodall secured his brace early on to give Hales a 3-2 lead.

Hales had a goal chalked off, after a quick counter-attacking play was bought back by the umpires following a discussion surrounding a quick free-hit.

However, this mattered little when Chales Palmer fired home with a reverse stick shot to make it 4-2.

Stone attempted to stage a comeback when a mistake by Ben Hughes gave an easy finish to the visitors striker, but it was too little too late, and Hales walked away with a deserved 3 points.

On Sunday, it was third time lucky as Chesterfield who visited Halesowen, following two previous postponements due to the adverse weather conditions over the previous weeks.

Chesterfield fielding just 10 players, struggled to make chances throughout, and it was Hales who dominated possession from the start of the game.

Mark Curzon opened the scoring when he improvised following a mistake on a penalty corner. Graham Knight doubled the lead for the hosts,



Old Halesonian goal scorer Paul Woodall who played a big part in the matches against Stone and Chesterfield

when his cross was helped into the net by a deflection off a Chesterfield defender who was trying to keep it out.

In the second half, Hales took control of the game and never really relinquished it as they went on to put nine into their opponent's net.

Tom Bulteel got his name on the score sheet, before Chesterfield got a consolation from a penalty corner of their own but the game was out of their grasp by then.

Paul Woodall scored on his reverse to make it 4-1, before goals from Graham Knight, Matt Cole and Cole Hickman, saw Hales disappear out of sight and leave their opponents behind.

Knight secured his hat-trick with a deft touch over the rushing Chesterfield goalkeeper to make it 8-1.

Then it was time for Ben Hughes break his five-year goal drought to close the scoring and bring the game to an end at 9-1.

Fourths keep up the pressure for shut out

**Old Halesonians 4ths 27
Pershore 2nds 0**

OLD Hales were quickly into their stride and after several phases of play, prop Chris Deeks scored from close range. The conversion was missed.

Hales were immediately on the attack from the restart and after some good work by the forwards the ball was moved to the right, and a well-timed pass from Jack Linehan gave Dan Smith the space to score a well-worked try.

Smith was on the score sheet again following good work by hooker Gary Jones who offloaded the ball to him to score.

Pershoregained more possession and their flyhalf and centres made valiant attempts to breach the Old Hales defence, but it held firm.

The home side got back on track when they moved upfield and Jamie Leech ripped the ball from a maul and raced 20 metres to score under the posts. George Taylor added the conversion to make the score 22-0 at half time.

In the second half Old Hales capitalised on a deep kick from Pershore.

Smith collected the ball on the bounce and linked with Jamie Leech who in turn released Brad Vernon supporting on the right. Vernon raced 40 metres towards the Pershore line before passing inside to Jack Linehan who scored.

Old Hales scorers – tries: Chris Deeks, Dan Smith (2), Jamie Leech, Jack Linehan. Conversion: George Taylor.

Neither Old Halesonians 2nds or 3rds played games at the weekend.

**Old Halesonians Colts 41
Bromsgrove Colts 27**

Parker to take up No.8 spot at Brummies

BIRMINGHAM Speedway are delighted to announce our new No.8 squad rider for the season – it's a big welcome to Robert Parker.

Parker, aged 19, is a talented all-round motorcyclist who only tried speedway for the first time last April.

He's been riding Motorcross since he was 10 and Brummies boss Graham Drury has seen enough to give him a chance.

"Robert is comfortable on the bike and I like his attitude, I'm pleased to welcome him to Birmingham Speedway as our No.8 rider," he said.

"He's been riding whenever possible during the winter and I like his riding style. It would be no major surprise if he started putting our reserves under pressure. We will endeavour to get him fixed up with as many outings as possible."



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Reanne on the road to play Crucible

IT'S a long way from Baggeridge Social Club to the Crucible.

But Reanne Evans is well on the road to Sheffield – and is hoping to make history as the first woman to take part in the snooker World Championships.

Not that Reanne is new to global exposure in the sport.

As women's world champion for 10 years running and the first woman to take part in the final stages of a world ranking event, Reanne Evans is used to breaking down barriers.

The 29-year-old from Dudley has been invited to play in the qualifying rounds of the tournament, with the carrot of massive TV exposure if she makes it to the finals proper.

Practising at Baggeridge and Sedgley Ex-Servicemen's Club, mother-of-one Reanne first found fame when she was one of two West Midlands amateurs to represent Britain at the European Team Championships in Latvia in 2004.

The former Bishop Milner School business studies student then went on to defend her world championship title while pregnant, admitting: "My bump made things a bit difficult on certain shots but I was very pleased with the way I performed."

While used to attention from the media, nothing has prepared her for the excitement and support she has received since announcing she would compete in the qualifying rounds of the World Championship, which will be held at Ponds Forge, Sheffield, from April 8-15.

She said: "It's been very manic. From the moment the announcement went out the phone didn't stop. I had to charge my phone three times."

Reanne will need to win three matches to get through the qualifying stage.

Baggies pair are shortlisted for monthly awards

ALBION boss Tony Pulis is in the running to be named Premier League Manager of the Month for February, while goalkeeper Ben Foster is up for the player award.

The duo have been nominated following a month in which the Baggies were unbeaten in four Premier League games and conceded only two goals.

Home wins over Swansea City and Southampton, coupled with draws at Burnley and Sunderland, also helped Albion climb clear of the relegation zone.

Swans boss Garry Monk is one of Pulis' rivals for the manager prize, along with Hull's Steve Bruce and Liverpool's Brendan Rodgers, both of whom steered their clubs to unbeaten records in the month.

Foster, who kept three clean sheets in the four games, faces stiff competition for the Player of the Month award from the likes of Spurs striker Harry Kane, who scored four goals in as many games.

Arsenal's Mesut Ozil, Swansea's Jonjo Shelvey, Hull's Dame N'Doye and Liverpool's Philippe Coutinho make up the rest of the six nominees.

Cricket club celebrating selection

HALESOWEN cricketers are celebrating selection at county level after a host of successful winter trials.

The club have revealed Yusuf Khan, Elliot Evans, Tom Powell, Alex Jordan, Rhys Evans, Hayden Evans, Charlie Greening, Hassan Akram, Raqeeb Khan, Juhar Johal, Masharraf Shazad, Deon Patel and Tom Wickstead have been called to their respective Worcestershire County and District age group training squads.

In addition, Tom Duke, Tom Baker, Sam Butt, Jake Ricketts, George Byrne, Mustafa Mumtaz, Arran Singh, Archie Reeves and Nathan Hines have all been selected to represent the North

Cricket

Worcestershire District at their respective age groups. Club chairman Richard Evans said: "Once again the club are immensely proud that so many of our lads have been selected to play representative cricket this summer.

"We congratulate them all and a special mention must go to Juhar, Masharraf and Hayden who have all been selected for the Development of Excellence squads by Worcestershire.

"On behalf of the Club and all parents I would like to thank all of the coaches who continue to

give their time freely and selflessly to develop all of our youth players."

Meanwhile the club will be unveiling several new signings in the near future ahead of the new season with the first and second teams again playing in the Birmingham & District Premier Leagues and the third and fourth teams in the Worcester County League.

The Club hold its AGM on Thursday March 19 and all members are urged to attend.

Tickets are selling well for the evening with former World Darts semi-finalist Wayne Mardle on Wednesday April 29 and are available from sportstalevents.co.uk.

OLD HALES LOSE BATTLE ROYALE

Bromsgrove 30 Old Halesonians 25

THIS always had the makings of a great battle, both sides fighting to stay in the top half of the league with Grove one place above.

Hales came out battling from the off and the larger home pack were continually knocked back by ferocious tackling from the visitors.

Hales backs had a platform and within minutes centre Carl Robinson and Brother Andy were making breaks. Carl collected and sprinted through the defence for a try, converted by Chris Hooper.

It was one way traffic for 25 minutes with another break by C Robinson, to the supporting Hooper to Wing Luke Smith who sprinted for a try, converted by Hooper.

A penalty was then converted by Hooper. Grove came back with a penalty but Hales again dominated in most areas, Hooper breaking for a try for a 3-22 lead at half time. The home side came out refreshed and quickly set about the fight back.

Excellent

Though the Hales tackling was excellent the pressure told with two tries, one converted for a 15-22 score. Hales again came back forcing another penalty which Hooper converted to lead 15-25.

Hales again suffered injuries with wing Warren Oliver and second row Guy Field leaving the play, replaced by Patrick Lufkin and James Martin this left replacement issues. Loz Breese moved to centre, Andy Robinson to full back and Prop replacement Harry Higgs coming in at second row.

The disruption affected Hales with 15 minutes to go, Bromsgrove took advantage and a penalty brought them to 18-25. They fought back with a try from a lineout and driving maul. The conversion was successful to draw level 25-25 with 5 minutes to go.

Hales could not get possession, Grove again made ground, fed their backs for the left wing to avoid tacklers to score the deciding try in the corner for a final score and victory 30-25..

Penalty point seals DK's fate



Luke Greenwood scores DK's first try late in the game against Longton

DK 12 Longton 31

DK kicked off and through good play established themselves in the Longton half for the first quarter of the game.

In the second quarter Longton came more into the game and were able to score two tries.

The first try came from an extra man in the line allowing full back Luke Fowles to run in. Their second try came from right wing Liam Price. After a few minutes of the second half, DK forced Longton to mishandle and James Jefferson skipped in for a try, only to turn round and find the referee penalising DK for offside.

Luke Fowles added another try, which took the score to 0-26, giving Longton the bonus point that relegated DK.

Then, true to recent form, a late revival, Luke Greenwood dived over the line following a driving maul.

From a dropped ball Mark Cartwright was on hand to touch down. Jamie Hearn added the extras.

To finish the scoring Liam Price made it a brace when he ran in unopposed in the last minute to make the score. Two players worthy of special mention are Jefferson and Luke Greenwood

Confidence for end of season spot

OLD Halesonians manager David Butler is confident they will end their season well, despite facing three of the top Midlands 1 teams in a matter of weeks.

They beat second place Stone at the weekend, earning enough points to ensure they will stay in the league this year.

An impressive effort and two goals from Paul Woodall boosted morale, with Charles Palmer and Graham Knight adding points later in the match.

With high spirits, they'll now face league leaders Stourport, who are undefeated in 18 matches but drew in their last against Telford & Wrekin.

Butler said: "We're quite positive about things at present as we've only been beaten twice in the last nine matches.

"We had a poor pre-season and it took its toll early on in the season but we're playing with more confidence and are under no illusions about the test that Stourport will present.

"They slipped up last week and should have already been crowned champions. I'm sure they'll be eyeing up this home game as a chance to seal it.

"We're looking forward to the challenge but will have to repeat the determination we showed against Stone.

"We believe we are a mid table side who can compete with anyone in the division. We have a stable squad.

"We are already beginning to looking ahead to next season, we do recognise a couple of quality signings could be what we need to push us to the top end of the table." Squad captain Christopher Wattleby added: "We have been trying to ease the pressure off ourselves as we find our game improves when we are relaxed."

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Williamson eager to start new season

CRADLEY Heathens star Matt Williamson is counting down the days in eagerness for the new season to start.

Williamson, who came through a successful practice session at Peterborough on Saturday, confirmed he is feeling fit and ready for the new season which is just over a week away.

He said: "I was the first to admit the end of last season was tough for me for a number of reasons, but after spending time back on a bike over the past few weeks I can't wait to go racing again.

"I feel fit and keen to impress everyone this season and want to improve again on what I achieved last season."

★★★

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